Can’t Take The Sky From Us Companion Book, Volume 2

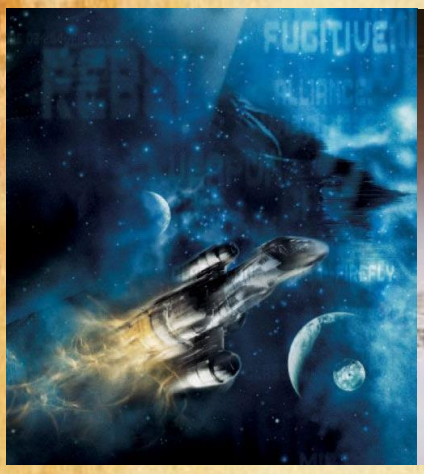


Table of Contents

1) The 2-parter episode Better Days(P.3)

2) Deck the Halls of Dōngjì(P.25)

3) Those Left Behind(P.39)

4) Riverfront(P.48)

5) In Wetware and War(P.54)

--> More Possible Episodes for Season 2**(P.63)**

6) Blue Suns and Townsfolks(P.74)

7) Not So Set in DNA(P.78)

8) Hellbound(P.86)

9) Hands of Blue(P.97)

10) Havens of Two Roads(P.100)

11) A Mixed Blessing On Us All(P.109)

12) All-Tempted and Junk(P.114)

--> Nandi's Character Bio**(P.118)**

13) Genradiation Countdown Run(P.129)

14) High Blue Noon(P.145)

15) A Dying Wish(P.164)

16) Kaylee, Get Your Priestess(P.179)

17) Double Jayne Trouble(P.192)

18) The Box Show(P.205)

19) A Serenity Movie Revisit(P.216)

20) After Miranda(P.219)(Bonus Ep)

21) Going Behind The Scenes of More Special Features for Can't Take The Sky From Us

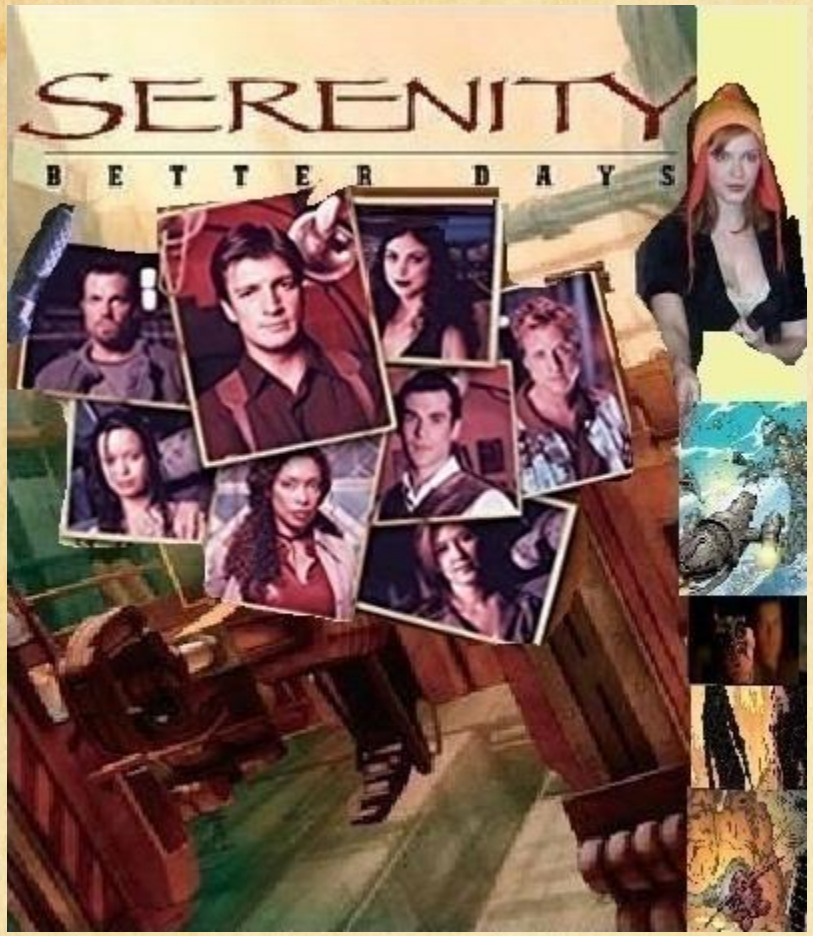
--> Cover Page**(P.233)(the picture for this chapter is too big not to be its own cover page)**

--> Notes for Alternate Takes Junkyard**(P.234)**

--> When Deadpool Met Saffron**(P.246)**

--> In-Character Gag Reel**(P.256)(for this one, there's very few notes)**

--> Storytime On Serenity**(P.256)**



Better Days

the Serenity: Better Days ~~episode or~~ 2-parter;

Loosely based on the Serenity: Better Days mini-series of comics/graphic novels, but with a fusion of new ideas for the Serenity crew and Saffron(including a big showdown in Act IV with Jubal Early, Atherton Wing, his fencing robot, and Stitch Hessian back from the dead)

1) (possibly?; at least very much implied) takes place two weeks or a month later from the end of Season 1

2) the gone south deal between two gangs at the art gallery was trading 300 million credits in cash for a black market prototype dedicated Source Box; both of them were in big brown sacks

--> in the midst of the shootout, Jayne gets greedy and stays in the art gallery

--> he takes the big brown sack left after unsuccessfully going after the guy going off with the other brown sack(which turns out to be the sack with 300 million inside)

3) guns with louder choos than most guns

--> (through both seasons of Can't Take the Sky From Us)

but also implying people in 2517 are so used to the loud noises of ships taking off and guns firing by now that it doesn't bother them much

4) black market prototype dedicated Source Box

--> can hack into any Alliance security logic core/computer

5) even in Sunner range, Jayne and Saffron can reach each other on the Cortex(just a little more static than usual)

--> linked directly to a modified Source Box

6) original terms from the episode 2-parter Better Days

--> wave buzz/buzzing = hack/hacking the Cortex

7) more on Alliance dedicated source boxes

--> (yet to reveal?; ~~for the 2-parter episode Better Days?~~) whenever someone tries to hack or even just rewire a Alliance dedicated source box, it automatically shorts out its own connection to the Cortex to greatly discourage criminals looking to make mods on source boxes(and in some later models, even short out the whole source box as a kind of self-destruct); commenting on media anti-piracy measures

--> Alliance dedicated source boxes come in solid colors; no complex themes(that is, unless someone who's got one paints it more complex themselves[but it can make most others in The Alliance instinctively uncomfortable at best with challenging the comforts of The Alliance])

--> (at least implied) have no headphones or headphone connector, because The Alliance doesn't give much thought to privacy of their citizens

--> when a Alliance dedicated source box is on, the TV frame projects a holographic screen within itself

--> [...] shaped and styled like a miniature square altar, with old fashioned antenna at the four corners, three disc slots for computer disks and archival video and music recorded Alli-ray discs, spread out nano speakers, no headphone connector, and a wood like TV frame bordered with Alliance colors coming out of the top.

--> (very much implied) Alli-rays both music and video; instead of blu-ray discs(short for Alliance-ray)

8) notable Chinese saying(s) from the episode 2-parter Better Days

[1] [with Saffron admiring the prototype Source Box(black market) from the almost watery screen on her modified Source Box]

Zhè shì yīgè fēicháng hǎo de wánjiā zhìzào hézi!

--> it's a royally good play maker box of hell!

[2] [with Saffron frustrated at the AATSs]

Liánméng wú rén jī bèndàn lǘ!

--> alliance drone fucker asses!

[3] [with Wash incredulous at Zoe for taking full responsibility for her deal with the Dust Devils, and just standing there unarmed for Mal to very possibly shoot and kill her over it]

Gāisǐ de suǒyǒu xíngxīng hé tàikōng rén!

--> damn all the planets and Sunners in space!

[4] [with Saffron shocked in very mixed feelings that Inara has blackmail on her]

You māmā dì dìyù!

--> You mother's hell!

9) time skip after the Serenity crew gets rich (2 weeks ~~or a month~~); then have it all kind of go out the window when The Alliance catches up to their continuing illegal activities~~(in addition to the guy who gave them a job the Serenity crew never delivered on coming after them[like it was originally in the mini-comic series Better Days])~~

--> on a closer look, the crossed out part above never happened in the mini-series comic Better Days

--> with Zoe's arms deal(see under 15) to 18) for more info) and cross reference face recognition scans(thanks to newer Alliance security camera software due to also be in the military skiffs 3.0), the Alliance realizes Mal's crew, Saffron, Jayne, Inara(thanks to a certain client of Inara's, a Alliance soldier named Ephiram, casually informing the Alliance of Mal's crew being around Inara in recent days), River, and Simon have been sighted close by each other(even though under different identifications except for Inara herself); which seems suspect

--> especially because it turns out Mal lied to the Alliance that Jayne is no longer part of his crew; to spare his own crew from being brought in for arrest and interrogation over Jayne's and Saffron's past illegal activities together

--> and Mal's whole crew is seen as outlaws from now on(until after the movie Serenity, when the Alliance splits in two and gets even more complicated[except for Inara and Book, who still end up being seen to The Alliance as having clean records in spite of the warrants]); because across the Verse, Mal and his crew have become legends since Verbena(and most of the Alliance is always going to be on the lookout for them, unless The Alliance itself says they're innocent)

10) Saffron though has a backup plan

--> she never told anyone else in case her riches would go out the window this quickly(in case someone would tell the Alliance under interrogation); until Mal's crew's riches go out the window

--> Saffron reveals she's in good with some corrupt Alliance police officers on Bellerophron; she helps them keep their operations quiet once in a while, and they give her a Alliance security backdoor to wipe clean any new arrest records on her in Bellerophron(so she could always hide out in one of their houses alone on Bellerophron and transfer all her money there, no questions asked)

--> she also hid a big bundle of Jayne's and her riches in the basement of her newly brought house(60-70 million credits worth), made sure to hide that part of the floor plans as soon as she bought it, and covered up the trapdoor to the basement well; making it seem that some of the riches in the house were all that was left

--> she was hoping she didn't have to use this backup plan to save Mal's crew(because then she'd have to reveal to them how she usually escapes detection from The Alliance[and she really doesn't like taking that risk of not being able to do it again]); but she still does because of caring for Jayne, Kaylee, and Mal

--> giving them all a safe house of sorts to stay in on Bellerophron

11) but, with Serenity taken by The Alliance to a dock, Mal and a member of Mal's crew(or Mal and Saffron) still have to go back to get it back before the scheduled Tohoku Class city ship gets it first(and get away in time back to Bellerophron without detection so they can hide from The Alliance and have Serenity back)

12) return of next generation Alliance military skiffs(but with a redesign strikingly similar to the tactical drone in the comic mini-series Better Days); starting to get out of the Verbena factory and across the Verse for The Alliance(and not for all of Verbena[as in Browncoats or Companions on Verbena who don't want them to spread across the Verse after the 2-parter Dead or Alive])

--> AATMS = Alliance All-Terrain Military Skiff

--> gyro oriented 3 axis gimbal for the built in robot eye camera

--> extendable heavy duty wheels for storm conditions in desert terrain(with tripod like doors for the compartments doubling as extra built in antenna to strengthen Cortex

connection reception in storm conditions); but the tripod like doors are easy to shoot off(even with a pistol)

--> (~~yet to reveal?~~; scrapped) has autopilot mode for emergencies to eject the pilot by ejection seat and then fly back to base

--> (scrapped) has self destruct mode in emergencies as well to avoid the technology falling in the wrong hands~~(?)~~

13) with a hacked in 3D printer terminal and a solid color tan T-shirt, Saffron makes a restoration of Jayne's torn up T-shirt(from the episode Twin Red Moons) for a surprise present for him

--> the T-shirt with the golden blond pin up girl before a soda parlor like rainbow

14) Saffron meets the Serenity crew more personally;

Jayne figures with all them rich all a sudden, it would be as good a time as any to see if she could be "part of the family" and impress Mal

--> only it turns out Mal was kind of one step ahead of him; and with some of his riches, he bribed Saffron with four or five million credits to "behave herself" around the crew "like a proper lady caretaker of the house"(much to Jayne's annoyance and most of the rest of the crew's amusement)

--> but River doesn't go to the special occasion because she still hates Saffron; so Simon stays with her to help her feel better and doesn't go either

15) in wake of the Alliance military skiffs 3.0 coming out, the Dust Devils get Zoe to provide them with guns no questions asked

16) the Dust Devils = a terrorist organization of extremist Browncoats(old and new), formed in the recent month or so in the wake of the civil war on Verbena

17) they were initially planning to just go after the Alliance military skiffs 3.0 and destroy them all; but with most of Zoe's millions, Zoe arranges to get the access codes to Parliament and Alliance Intelligence off the black market + gets enough Graycoats and guns to pull it off

--> (related to above) Zoe was hoping to end the Alliance for good by killing the top politicians(aside from people that sheltered Mal's crew or had fairly good business dealings with); but she let newfound power and her own hate for the Alliance cloud her judgment and only thought to warn Browncoats in hiding back on Verbena(completely forgetting that she should've warned people that sheltered Mal's crew, had fairly good business dealings with, or at least Inara having some friends at the top that would likely be shot in the crossfire without warning ahead of time)

18) but Zoe's bigger plan leads to the Alliance going after the Serenity crew very quickly; taking away the new guns, taking away the newer belongings and riches from Mal's crew, taking away Serenity to a dock to be picked up by a Tokohu Class city ship for inspection the next day, sending in several people from Mal's crew's past to try to swiftly take in Mal's whole crew and Saffron to be held for arrest and interrogation, and arresting most of the Graycoats and Dust Devils ~~nearby~~ involved to be shot and killed(for being a terrorist organization)

--> because even if the Dust Devils could be trusted not to shoot first(or it'd be just plain murder to Mal), Zoe tried to help the Dust Devils too soon

--> and now Mal's crew and some of the Dust Devils are fighting just to survive

19) for old enemies from Mal's crew's past sent by The Alliance(along with Jubal[as something of a Firefly anniversary of Season 1 and how far the crew has come since in facing their enemies])

--> (done) Jubal Early comes back~~(?)~~, appearing in the 2-parter episode Better Days; then Jubal is for sure killed, when Mal punches him through a hole in the second floor of the burning Frye Airworks and he's burned to a corpse

--> Atherton Wing; wanting very much to clean off his black mark from The Guild, he gladly accepts a mission from Alliance Intelligence to bring Inara and Mal in for questioning in exchange for a fair trial that could lead to cleaning off his black

mark(but of course he's not just content with a fair trial[he wants to kill ~~find~~ Inara ~~guilty no matter what~~ now for revenge])

--> (related to above; mostly scrapped) but Inara easily takes him down; she pretends to be held captive by Mal with her hands behind her back and calls out for his help(but when Atherton goes to untie her, Inara disarms him and forces him to flee back to Persephone[or knocks him out with the hilt of her fencing sword])

--> Stitch Hessian; revived from death by the Hands of Gray(as a covert ultimate check and balance against Jayne by The Alliance[at least in theory]), with cryogenics, a grown heart organ from a sample of his own DNA, and some metal chest plating to protect him from being stabbed or shot there

--> (related to above[1]; at least implied, but to reveal fully later?; done)

it's a experimental procedure under the Hands of Gray; time sensitive and not known to much anyone outside of them or the Hands of Blue(which Alliance Intelligence is turning a blind eye to), but it's not until now do they get the chance to test how well the procedure did(because of what Stitch Hessian was revived to do) and see if they can do it again with someone else recently dead

--> (related to above[2]; to reveal fully later?; done) shortly after the episode Jaynestown, Magistrate Higgins was given a offer by the Hands of Gray to take Stitch Hessian's body away and cover up his involvement; and also to revive him to likely go after Jayne one day(and Magistrate Higgins practically jumped at the chance; this part implied well enough?)

20) Mal of course is naturally upset that Zoe was ready to cross the same lines Private Declan did; but, in the wake of the Alliance stopping her plan in time, he doesn't shoot her

--> (second part very much implied) but he does say she's no longer his second in command on the crew; and that Inara is his most likely choice for a new second in command

--> (first part scrapped; but second part done) Mal tells Zoe that if she wants to leave his crew, now's the time; but he also threatens that if Zoe crosses those lines again, he will shoot her

--> Zoe is hurt, but she realizes Mal was right(that she did let hate for the Alliance cloud her judgment)

--> and Zoe stays on Mal's crew, fully accepting Mal demoting her

21) Saffron has a "not so Alliance friendly" dedicated Source Box(that she redesigned the inner workings of herself, with just a bit of help from a typically short technical manual on dedicated source boxes)

--> it's not seen again after the warrants on Mal's crew and Saffron go over the Cortex; implying it was taken by The Alliance when they cleaned out Saffron's and Jayne's residential suite

22) Saffron uses the corrupt Alliance cops's dedicated Alliance Source Box to play a audio Alli-ray disc at high pitch that only a dog, a cat, or River can hear to try to block River from reading her mind

--> ends up having to turn it down though to not have River's enhanced senses overloaded and have a heart attack(which River is saved from); to protect River from her own audio Alli-ray disc, Saffron ejects the disc ~~turns it down a lot more and then finds a volume in the middle~~

--> but Saffron is saddened, ~~saddened and kind of~~ breaking down, and embarrassed by it all, because when she ejected ~~turned down~~ the audio Alli-ray disc on her source box, she had the feeling River could read a bit of her mind~~(but~~ she mostly ~~just~~ reads Saffron is real afraid of her ~~got kind of embarrassed)~~

--> also because she sympathizes with River's tragic story of being experimented on by The Alliance(even though she's real afraid of River's capabilities and doesn't want to admit it out loud)

--> Saffron fast walks to a door, slamming it shut rather than let the Serenity crew see her tears; only for Zoe or Inara to notice the hall floor is wet with some fallen tears anyway

23) Jayne suggests himself leaving with Saffron for good, so that it won't have to come to shooting guns with the Serenity crew and to ensure Saffron is protected from River(and quite possibly to protect the crew from Saffron if she has a mental breakdown over this and guns for most all of them)

--> but Mal, who at the very least doesn't want to break up his crew over this(nor face Saffron on a mental breakdown), convinces Jayne he's more likely to calm Saffron down and convince her River is not going to kill her; a large part of it being Mal and Jayne both know Mal himself is special to Saffron, and the other part being that Mal thinks he's already seen the worst of Saffron(and so by now can handle whatever comes his way with her)

24) despite Saffron telling him to go away at first, Mal is successful and gets Saffron to stick around with the Serenity crew(and it's then when Saffron reveals to Mal her crush on him)

25) (possibly?; kind of scrapped and kind of not) in reflection, River "still really doesn't like her; but that between fractured parts of parts she'd played before the kingdom in space[of the Verse], it seems to have come together as one; and she seems less of a liar(how much less of a liar or how much good of a person Saffron is is left very unsure to River, and so she wonders if she should feel sorry for her or not)"

26) (possibly?; Jayne part kind of scrapped and kind of not) when the riches kind of go out the window, Jayne convinces Saffron to let the Serenity crew take shelter in a hiding place on Bellerophron ~~her place~~(even with how most of the crew is still on edge about her being around, and with how Saffron is on edge about being around River more so than even Jayne is)

--> but, for the movie Serenity, that ironically means that since Saffron sheltered the crew before, she's warned about the Alliance Operative in time to escape herself

27) with his riches, Mal bought a custom made Flying Mule with the Serenity logo on it(which is really the same Flying Mule Mal and his crew have in the movie Serenity); it's really for his crew

28) instead of Simon paying to have sex with Inara, Kaylee pays Inara to help her in secret be taught how to have sex with and date someone from the middle class(as in wanting to prepare herself to give Simon her love and not make it uncomfortable for him out of caring for him that much)

--> and especially with everyone being rich at the time, Kaylee is also hoping this is finally a good time to admit her feelings for Simon(and for Simon to be comfortable with her and not have to think so much about protecting River for once)

--> (for the in secret part) Kaylee gets all dressed up(strikingly similar to how Inara dresses), puts on strawberry lipstick, and pays in advance "as a client" as Jewel Mechan

--> (related to above[1]) Jewel Mechan = a shortened form of "Jewel Staite the ship's mechanic on Firefly(Mal's crew)" as a inside joke(it also is a Better Days, Part 1 episode Easter egg)

--> (related to above[2]) but Kaylee doesn't realize she should've told Inara ahead of time, until Inara almost stormed off into the bedroom in her suite on Pelorum because she thought Kaylee is trying to pressure her into having a relationship with her; but Kaylee explained herself and apologized, and Inara and Kaylee made up as friends

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) but then Simon comes rushing in a panic over River missing(or similar) at the worst possible time, and Inara hides while Kaylee just awkwardly kind of sits there naked

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) Simon and Kaylee are both bittersweetly tempted to go further, but Kaylee frustratedly knows if River is in trouble that it's got to wait

--> and by the time the trouble around River has passed, the riches kind of go out the window(and Kaylee hates that her good time to tell Simon has gone out the window, like many a time before)

--> but Inara encourages Kaylee not to give up, and even gives Kaylee a copy of a Companion guide(or something similar) to help her even more so

--> which Kaylee somberly but also happily thanks her for; and also knowing deep down that both her and Simon likely have the same feelings for each other, even though she knows she never got a answer for sure yet(until of course in the movie Serenity where Simon admits his love for her)

29) The Alliance sends in Jubal Early to collect the bounty on Saffron and ~~or~~ ~~on~~ the Serenity crew

--> Jubal Early though, in his creepy way, admires Saffron for "proving herself worthy of being a player by letting herself be played first"; as in her own first jobs, where she let rich men sexually abuse her just so she could steal from them behind their backs

--> no surprise knockouts from behind; a fair fight(or as fair as it can get with Jubal Early and Saffron)

--> Saffron goes after Jubal alone; thinking Jayne wouldn't last long against Jubal and that she's protecting him from another very painful choice by going after Jubal alone

30) ~~(to save for Part 2; after fighting Stitch Hessian revived from death)~~

(to save instead for Act I ~~the teaser~~ in the Alliance carnival episode)

Jayne and Saffron are talking about Jayne's statue(from Jaynestown)

--> and Saffron brings up about originally planning to put the Lassiter in a museum to try to help him feel better

31) (to keep in mind throughout all episodes of Can't Take The Sky From Us)

writing process for Firefly/Buffy episodes; in Jane Esperson's own words:

"I've been asked to describe the writing process on a Joss Whedon show. I am primarily a *Buffy* writer, and I'm not in the *Firefly* writing room that often, but the general procedure is similar.

[...] find a story in which we explore her mental state metaphorically[aka Buffy for example]

Notice that the episode ideas *begin* with "what is she going through" and never with "what would be a good slaying challenge?

Once we have the central theme of the episode, and we understand how the main character will change during it, we begin "breaking" the story. This is done as a group, with the entire staff participating, except for anyone who is currently out writing the script for the previous week's episode. Breaking the story means organizing it into acts and scenes.

When the break is complete, the white board is covered in blue marker, with a brief ordered description of each scene.

The act break moments should be clear and large.

In my Firefly episode 'Shindig', the third act ends with Mal stabbed, badly injured, in danger of losing the duel. It does not end with Mal turning the fight around, when he stands victorious over his opponent. They're both big moments, but one of them leaves you curious and the other doesn't.

32) there were nine more episodes originally planned for Season 1 after the episode War Stories, but then the studio ordered only two or three more instead(prior to officially cancelling the mainstream Firefly show)

--> six more episodes for Firefly Season 1 for Can't Take the Sky from Us(done)

--> (related to above) Dead or Alive 2-parter counts as getting a extra episode(-2 +1 number of remaining episodes for Season 1; Firefly: Better Days episode[heavily based on the comic three part mini-series Firefly: Better Days] might very well become a 2-parter)

33) [to save for Part 2; in a nod to Jayne's original fantasy for being rich in the comic mini-series Better Days]

Jayne reveals when he was grown up, he was dreaming of being captain with a crew, with a dark green army uniform, with gold décor on the shoulders and a black belt

with gold bar like pouches; with a big ass ship and a crew of women in dark green army uniforms(ideally so for all the above)

--> he was though just as happy with having a smaller crew and a Hanover class ship

34) after the episode Twin Red Moons, Jayne has had serious second thoughts about trying to be captain again

--> but in light of Saffron being there for him no matter what, he concludes they don't even need a crew to run a ship; together, they don't need anyone else(especially with Saffron doubling as a mechanic and a Companion of sorts)

--> Saffron thinks it's really touching

--> she even offers they can still "play parts" as the captain of his wildest dreams to please him if he wants(dark green army uniforms and all)

35) (kind of scrapped and kind of not; possibly?) when the riches kind of go out the window, Mal's crew is left broke; and the only one they can turn to for money is Saffron(so in desperation, Mal tells Jayne to see if he can convince her to give them some money)

--> see under Notes for Alternate Takes Junkyard[(5-6) of Deleted Scenes for Better Days Part 2] for more info

36) more scrapped ideas for 2-parter episode Better Days

(1) Jayne and Saffron go to fight Jubal; but Jayne gets easily taken out and stunned through some shelves, leaving Saffron alone to fight Jubal

(2) [for going back to Saffron and Jayne's residential suite in Part 2]

Saffron managing to leave up a connection to the Cortex or something so River can hack into The Alliance's computers and try to recover the riches The Alliance took from them; but River just manages to find where Serenity is being held(even with the residential suite cleaned out); and everyone on the crew would show up

--> (scrapped; because most of the crew wouldn't be in the mood to come inside)

37) after the riches kind of go after the window, Inara does some digging into the Companion Guild for a certain Verity(the identity Saffron used to seduce a young Companion hopeful to train Saffron herself how to be a Companion in exchange for sex and try to steal from a Companion academy; left unanswered in the 2-parter episode Better Days, but ended up unnecessary to answer in said 2-parter episode)

--> Inara then pulls from Guild law by saying Verity has yet to finish her credits to graduate as a "secret Companion" from the academy, ~~and that she's gotten permission from the Companion Guild to help guide Saffron through all those missing days of written Companion exams(even though Inara isn't really expecting Saffron to pass the course)~~

--> really, Inara's blackmailing Saffron to spend two weeks alone with her for psychological observation in exchange for not reporting Saffron herself to the authorities through the Companion Guild to be arrested(as Inara's way of knowing for sure Saffron won't pull something on the Serenity crew again)

--> appearing to be applying to be a Companion; even though it'll never make it to the Academy(it'll only make it to Inara and Mal)

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) and, the exams are really for a completely different Companion hopeful identity that was made up by Mal and Inara(implying Mal was all too happy to let Inara go ahead with this); so that Inara didn't report Saffron to the Companion Guild to get those exams, but Inara still can if she feels like it

38) Inara also gets Saffron to finally let go of the corrupt Alliance cops

--> pointing out with most of all of Jayne's money still hers and with her arrest record clean again, she really doesn't need the corrupt Alliance cops anymore; she can just pay for a get out of jail free card on her own and leave the

corrupt Alliance cops to be finally arrested through Inara(no mention of Saffron coming up as the reason for their arrest)

--> Saffron really didn't like working with those corrupt Alliance cops anyway; even though she's kind of reluctant to let them be arrested out of worrying of herself being arrested again, she happily agrees with Inara(much to Inara's relief)

39) Saffron reluctantly accepts the rest of Inara's terms, on three "not hard to do" conditions; that Inara doesn't lock her up in a trash bin again, that this is only a one time thing, and that Inara and Mal are the only other people that can know about the results of this psychological observation

--> Inara accepts Saffron's conditions, finding no problem with them

--> (related to above) when Inara asks why Jayne can't know either, Saffron openly admits she doesn't even want Jayne to know the results of this psychological observation(out of fear of Jayne treating her like Durran Haymer, who said to her "you need help, Yolanda"[in the episode Trash])

--> Saffron also says she's only not going to get even with Inara because of her love for Jayne and him liking Inara(but Saffron doesn't feel like outright mentioning about Jayne's crush on Inara since Inara is blackmailing her; only that Jayne likes her[at least as a friend]); Inara takes it as a compliment

--> but, when Saffron goes to leave the room to supposedly pack some things to get ready, Inara tells Saffron politely to give her back the papers of evidence around Verity she just tried to steal

--> kind of frustrated, Saffron turns the papers back in to Inara

--> Saffron adds she wanted to at least try(much to Inara's amusement)

--> and, before Saffron leaves to pack some things(and of course to say goodbye for now to Jayne), Inara says something like she wouldn't expect less

40) (for the end of Part 2) the jungle gym of wide open pipes made of bent full circle pipelines Jayne and Saffron go to; purposely left up in the air if it's on

Atreus or not(but the look of it was inspired by the short story Fun with Dick and Jayne by Ben Edlund)

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for the 2-parter episode Better Days]

A lot was pre-planned for this 2-parter episode. Only a few scenes weren't(including the reworked end of Part 1).

I may have kept a lot of what's already in the Better Days comic mini-series. But, I changed a lot as well.

1) I threw out the very controversial scene with Simon walking out of Inara's shuttle(that was implying he paid to be a client).

Instead? I had some quite controversial but more sensical scenes.

One was with Kaylee passing herself off as a client at first to secretly turn to Inara for help in how to love Simon the way he likely wants to be.

2) I changed up the tactical drone from Better Days into a third generation of Alliance military skiffs(a 3.0 Alliance military skiff).

3) I added the advanced modified Source Box part and the little gang war in the beginning because I thought it'd be more interesting to have Jayne find the riches instead.

4) I liked showing that Saffron isn't so perfect as she thinks she is in a clearer light.

But, I really liked following up on Saffron and Jayne's relationship as well.

5) Originally...

Better Days just had the Serenity crew find riches, and then lose them the next day or so.

I figured screw that:

Let’s actually show them be rich for a while with better days before we pull the rug out from under them.

Yes: That was what the part with the Alliance Colonel is building up towards.

I purposely left it vague as to why or how in Part 1. But, more is revealed in Part 2.

6) I know Zoe’s story in the comic mini-series Better Days was very different. But, I have two strong reasons why:

[1] Originally, the Dust Devils rose up shortly after the Unification War ended(which was why negotiations took longer than they should have).

But... How could Zoe go off and do that, when she and Mal were both standing waiting for a final decision?

At least from going off from the deleted scene for the aftermath of the Battle of Serenity Valley? That certainly seems to be what the writers on Firefly were originally going for.

I also haven't seen any other evidence to the contrary.

[2] With the whole part of "it ain't war if they ain't shooting at you" from the 2-parter episode Dead or Alive... I realized something.

Even if being one of the Dust Devils was ancient history to Zoe presently... That wouldn't sit well with Mal easy.

Zoe going off with the Dust Devils in the middle of negotiations at the end of the Unification War would likely lead to Mal shooting her...and then there would be no Zoe on Firefly to begin with.

So... I changed the timetable to instead be formed in the wake of the aftermath of the 2-parter episode Dead or Alive.

I also had Zoe's efforts fail spectacularly so Mal would ultimately decide not to shoot her(at least this once).

Yes. That definitely wasn't the only reason. But, it's what started my idea for Zoe's transformation in Part 2.

7) I thought the Serenity crew losing their riches because of one of the crew getting kind of corrupted by the power of money would be a bigger gut punch than just a arms dealer trying to stealing the money from under them.

Zoe getting dangerously close to that edge is in itself a gut punch for Mal:

Because if even his close friend and first mate Zoe can be close to that edge? So can he.

8) On lighter notes...

I kept two cameos from the comic mini-series.

One was Ephraim: Whose scene with Inara I mostly kept the same.

The other cameo was the former Companion police officer Zoe met with with arms dealing.

But... She originally was just part of a gang trying to rob credits from people at a fancy restaurant.

9) Most everything around Saffron in Parts 1 and 2 was planned since Twin Red Moons.

But... The corrupt Alliance cops, her trying to kill Jubal alone, and the ending with Jayne and Saffron wasn't originally planned.

Even I thought the corrupt Alliance cops part was kind of convoluted.

But... It was the best idea I had for Saffron ultimately saving the crew from being found and arrested by The Alliance on Persephone.

Plus... It seemed like the best explanation among several possible explanations around why Saffron's arrest on Bellerophron and the bounty placed on her from Dead or Alive wouldn't stay up long.

10) There's a lot I liked writing in Part 2 of the 2-parter episode Better Days.

But... The fight with Jubal, Inara blackmailing Saffron, and Mal's realization in the end were high up there.

Ironically, the fight with Jubal echoed Jubal's defeat in Objects in Space.

Mal being the one to deliver the final blow to Jubal was very satisfying to me.

11) I intentionally changed up the format for a Firefly episode for Part 2 of the 2-parter episode Better Days:

With a lot of action in the middle, and a lot of drama after.

12) I was originally going to have Saffron and Kaylee say goodbye for now more officially.

But... Kaylee needed more time to herself over other things that were troubling her.

I didn't get to have everything I originally was going to have in Part 2.

But...

It probably wouldn’t have felt like Better Days coming and going: Even if I could fit those several things in.

I just carried most of them over to the next episode one way or another. It was not a big deal.

13) I added the episode disclaimer at the end in case someone misinterprets a title for a pop culture reference:

Because on Firefly, behind the scenes, Joss Whedon stayed away from pop culture references.

I also liked adding the Easter egg at the end.

Maybe it's a little corny. But, it was partly on the off chance someone doesn't know who wrote the unaired episode transcript for Dead or Alive.

The other part for why is people could use more happy thoughts.

Deck the Halls of Dōngjì

a episode where the Serenity crew is given a job to investigate a Alliance friendly carnival for “un-friendlies”, where attendees are starting to disappear overnight

(~~for season 1 finale?;~~ not for season 1 finale, but for the episode after the 2-partter episode Better Days)

1) at first, it’s a job from a outlaw(or something like that) at the Alliance friendly carnival

--> (related to above) a good acquaintance of Inara’s named Mayer is in the junk smuggling business

2) the junk smuggling business; mostly in old ship parts that have been decommissioned by The Alliance to make way for the new ship lines, and deemed illegal under health concerns for faster wear and tear, radiation from decaying parts, and rust(despite most smugglers finding easy ways to compensate for the wear and tear with relatively newer parts, detox the radiation, and salvage pieces from rusted over parts)

--> the job for the Serenity crew would be to help Mayer smuggle out fifteen or so storage crates full of old ship parts to some black market ship builders(on a neighboring planet or moon we never find out where)

3) Kaylee originally comes on the job with Mal to double check they're all decommissioned, and if they could get a newer or spare engine part or two for Serenity in the midst of all the ship parts

--> but after Mayer gets kidnapped by the anti-Alliance extremists, that job goes south before it even begins; but on the bright side, The Alliance doesn't know about the job(it's more because of bad timing now than anything else)

--> (related to above) River hacks into the security cameras to make it seem they have overcoats and cowboy hats so the Serenity crew can pull off the job anyway; but once The Alliance realizes they're there, they'll check the security cameras and catch on to River's hacking(so she only gets to try this once)

4) a Christmas episode, but also of Chinese winter holidays and others; under The Dōngjì Holidays(to be under one kind of easily compartmentalized umbrella of holidays[and Dōngjì is just Chinese for winter])

--> compartmentalized 2 weeks off available in shifts; Alliance folk(and other folk) can have 2 weeks off in the first or second half of December, January, or February(but that's all they get for a vacation or a paid vacation from their lines of work)

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) have the carnival between Asian thanksgiving themed(or similar) and Christmas themed

--> (related to above; kind of scrapped and kind of not?) to symbolize the Serenity crew coming back together as a family after Jayne left and came back(and struggling to hope against the black between Reavers and The Alliance, and hope for better days for the jobs they're barely getting by on[aka a oddball way of a Christmas theme as well as that of family])

--> (scrapped) was at first thinking of having the whole crew except for River be drugged by the extremist to be on the verge of becoming Reavers so River can save them(possibly including Inara); scrapped because not only would that take away River's struggle in her head to keep going against Reavers in the movie Serenity, but it would also mean no going back for the crew(once you're a Reaver, there is no going back really[no matter how hard River could try])

5) original terms from the episode Deck the Halls of Dōngjì

Secret Giftstuffs = the Verse's version of Secret Santa(and doubling as avoiding pop culture references)

6) [this idea was for a Christmas episode in poor taste; move over to the episode Those Left Behind instead]

at the end of the episode, Mal sends a wave or a letter to Inara confessing his dark secret(hoping things can get less complicated between him and Inara now); but it leaves things more complicated for Inara, despite Mal's good intentions

--> (possibly?; kind of scrapped and kind of not) this episode after the 2-parter Better Days; Inara thinking to herself about recently discovering Mal's dark secret and about to bring it up to Mal, only for the Alliance friendly carnival episode to put concern of the entire crew above her own concerns(until the next episode where Book leaves and then so does Inara)

--> (possibly?; scrapped) this episode Season 1 finale, or second to last with the episode Objects in Space the Season 1 finale still

7) (for the Alliance friendly carnival episode)

--> from Joss Whedon's own words

"I had a whole thing worked out where Kaylee was going to go to a carnival and see one in a sideshow and then it turned out to be a guy in costume, because Mal explained that no Reaver would ever, *ever* let themselves be caught alive, that they'd eat themselves first. And I always wanted to keep that. It would have been a long damn while before we ever really caught sight of one."

--> Mal explains that no Reaver would ever let themselves be caught alive, that they'd rather eat their own flesh than see themselves as roasted for someone else's interrogation; to tone it down well enough to be Teen rated, not M(because implied mature content, not explicit)

--> (related to above) implying The Alliance probably tried to confine a Reaver before with no success; also very much implying a Reaver would see confinement as a human oven, and they don't want to be "well done" or roasted(they want to fuck and eat each other's body parts raw); which in turn implies they don't like extreme heat or extreme cold(because of preferring things raw)

--> (part of the inspiration for the episode Deck the Halls of Dōngjì)
combine the carnival idea with the scrapped idea for a "Reaver-centric story" that Joss Whedon liked and "saw as a Christmas episode"

8) Alliance police catches Mal, Kaylee, and River that night; but, out of desperation to find some help to investigate for "un-friendlies"(and no one else answering in time), they give the Serenity crew the job and will even pay them for it(because most everyone, border folk, Operative, or not, have picked this particular 2 weeks to go on paid vacation in the wake of the Alliance crackdown)

--> but soon after the job, they'll go back to being wanted by The Alliance police

--> Alliance police in this case also won't let the rest of The Alliance government know about River or any of the Serenity crew showing up either(because The Alliance military would still see letting any of them go for now when it seems absolutely unnecessary to them as failure and have The Alliance shoot the police officers over it)

9) it turns out some anti-Alliance extremists were only kidnapping some random folk to get the attention of whoever does the job of looking for them to try to turn them into sideshow freaks(turning the whole job into one big warped carnival trying to force the Serenity crew into becoming “part of the circus” with drugs so they can rise up and overthrow the Alliance before they know what hit them)

--> the extremists have been sneaking in and out easily past security by posing as part of a independent Alliance sideshow with Reavers; disguising themselves as Reavers in costume and hiding most any human resembling clue of their real identities that a Alliance security camera could automatically pick up

--> (scrapped) the anti-Alliance extremists also killed some of the security guards and replaced them with their own people

--> all of this very much implying extremists that have become caught between The Alliance and the Reavers, and lost the fight against the darkness around them(who want anarchy/mobocracy; no government)

--> also putting to serious question how long the Serenity crew can fly against the darkness around them without going crazy themselves(especially with the whole job turning into one big warped carnival part)

10) but when Alliance police see drugged Zoe and Jayne firing at Mal, Kaylee, and River, they think it’s a demented trap by Mal’s crew(because of them being legends for a long time and seen as fugitives by The Alliance) and run for it(and Mal’s crew doesn’t get any money for their trouble)

11) ST8SIA-20 = a designer drug that doubles aggression and fear through ST8SIA-II, a gene directly linked to aggression, fear, and early mental development; it can bring severe schizophrenia to young children or babies, and low intensity schizophrenia to adults(ST8SIA-20 in small doses lasts for thirty minutes, but surgical gene treatment as soon as possible is still strongly recommended to be sure residual aggression and fear goes away)

12) Zoe's transformation in this episode was directly inspired by the fanfiction story Of Wolves and Devils's 2-parter episode Nightmare on Jesus St

The winter breeze parts ways, as the jolly begins to settle in in the night.

But, down on Jesus Street… It isn't just about jolly and thankfulness. It's about the birth of a new hope for the next year onward.

And, through the nightmares and dreams of the past… We all have it in us to be stronger than the pain: Because there's always hope for a new hope from within.

--> (related to above[1]) she took responsibility for her actions in the 2-parter episode Better Days; but out of being so hard on herself and on her being demoted, she feels she has to do everything herself and in a right way to not be careless again in her own selfishness and hate + prove herself worthy again in Mal's eyes(which leads to her and Jayne getting taken down and drugged, because Zoe didn't give Jayne a chance to catch up in time to really help her take down the Reaver costumed extremists)

--> (related to above[2]) but when Mal and River help save her from herself from being drugged, River gets Mal to very awkwardly apologize to Zoe for not being the least bit assuring over her demotion; and that's enough for her to hear(very much implying that that saves her in more ways than one[that she shouldn't have to do everything herself to do things right again, and that there can be a balance between it and thinking of herself])

13) with River kicking down a drugged up Zoe to disarm her before she can shoot Mal, Mal really starts to consider having River as a official part of his crew; so does River for that matter(but "when the time is there"[very much implying River going with Mal on the job in the beginning of the movie Serenity, and also implying Mal giving her more leeway to help his crew on a job in the short story The Other Half])

--> (scrapped) The Alliance also gave the Serenity crew traceable money in the hope of getting it all back soon anyway with their arrests; so Mal very reluctantly has it all burned(because there's no point in making holes in the paper bills to get out all the tracers, even if River or Simon could get out or zap every single one[would be seen as counterfeit then])

14) Companions can have lovers or be personal Companions

--> but they're usually limited to 5 clients at most by the Companion's Guild(so that he/she has time to be with a lover or be a personal Companion and still can find time to tend to his/her clients); maybe 6 if a Companion has good standing with the Companion's Guild

--> a personal Companion though has the luxury of getting to choose if he/she only tends to the person he/she is a personal Companion for or not(because only rich folk can afford a personal Companion, especially for most anytime)

--> a rich man/woman or a rich family can choose more than one personal Companion; they usually only have one maid or none at all(simply because there's no need for more than one maid in that kind of household)

--> a Companion also has to file lover papers, marriage papers, or personal Companion papers to legally be recognized by The Alliance and the Companion's Guild as being a lover, a wife/husband, or a personal Companion; signed by both parties(Companion and lover/wife/husband)

15) Christmas gifts for the Serenity crew

[1] origami Serenity; River's gift for Mal and/or Inara

[2] (related to above) but since origami doesn't cost much credits, River also got a Christmas gift and belated birthday gift for Simon(which was the name River got in Inara's drawing; also calling back to the episode Out of Gas when River

didn't remember to get him anything); a unbiased history of the Unification War in a custom paid for journal(Book helped her write it[with his long history of being a double agent for the Browncoats])

[3] a box set of taken apart gun parts for spares to replace wearing out or shot ones in Jayne's collection; Kaylee's gift for Jayne

[4] some young kids dinosaur books from the same bookstore on Sihnon; Mal's gift for Wash

[5] a novel on philosophy and war from a bookstore on Sihnon(From Marsilio Ficino to Matthias Corvinus: Charting Causalities and Behaviors in the Renaissance); Zoe's gift for Book

[6] a computer disc with ten archival restored albums of calming music on it(for River to enjoy and to maybe help with her episodes); Wash's gift for River

[7] a mostly silver bracelet with a hidden tranquilizing needle; Jayne's gift for Zoe(he was looking for a easily hidden weapon Inara would be okay with or a knife, but the tranquilizing needle was Saffron's idea because she thought "it goes well with the part of her that shoots")

[8] a computer disc with a historical database on the Verse(but he sent waves of historical edits to Inara to program into it ahead of time for full disclosure of events that The Alliance doesn't want to tell folk[knowing how much Kaylee really likes hearing about history from him]); Simon's gift for Kaylee

[9] Mal offered up his chance to have a gift to someone else "in the spirit of Alliance kept holidays"; so Jayne of course jumped at the chance to get Saffron a Christmas gift(much to Inara's regret)

[10] Christmas gift for Saffron(from Jayne); (more to reveal later?) he thought of nudes for Mal(this first part already brought up), gold bullet like grenades(custom made like from Vera, and gotten from the black market or

something), and 3D printer blueprints for Vera; but Inara thought getting any of those things were too much for her conscience to take and turned them down

[11] (related to above[1]) and telling Saffron about Jaynestown comes after Jayne already chose a gift for Saffron; so no head bust of Jayne or a statue of Saffron(because the idea wouldn't come to Jayne until after)

[12] (related to above[2]) so Jayne finally settles on a early wedding gift; Saffron's already rich(so more money to Saffron wouldn't really add up to much sense to Jayne, even though Saffron would gladly take it anyway)

[13] (related to above[3]) a expensive engagement ring custom designed to look like one of Vera's custom grenades sticking out the center(which simultaneously looks like a big crayon and is the next best thing to giving her a gold bullet like grenade); but with Saffron's name engraved in it, and a ruby red bluish rim

[14] (related to above[4]) in light of Jayne's riches in Saffron's hands(and already having forwarded his mother a big cut of his credits after he and Saffron took down Niska[covering them well with health care for Matty and taxes for the rest of the year since the episode The Message Revisited]), Jayne actually went as far as giving Inara the rest of his gathered up cuts of platinum and credits on Mal's crew to cover the left over expense(leaving himself with no money of his own on Serenity for the time being[but it's still a big thing for Jayne to do with how greedy he can be])

[15] (leaving post part scrapped)Saffron leaves Post for Jayne by paying off a package carrier(despite the Alliance crackdown); shares ~~it's a computer disc that has~~ nudes of girls she got close to while on the run(in her early years of playing abusive rich men just to steal their money, most of the girls that were their victims wanted to get close to her for ruining the lives of their abusers[and some of them were bisexual, wanted "more than just gratitude", and got it from her]), ~~and nudes of Durran and pictures of his access codes that could be used as blackmail(which Saffron originally thought of possibly using as blackmail on him in retaliation of~~

~~keeping nudes on her for possible blackmail[even though the access codes are likely changed since the episode Trash])~~

~~[16] (related to above) the last part cracks Jayne up~~

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Deck the Halls of Dōngjì]

Firstly... The inspiration for writing this episode all began with a certain carnival sideshow scene(which I already talked about in this chapter).

Secondly... I figured a carnival with a sideshow with Reavers in costume would be too much money or too fancy for it to not be run by The Alliance.

So... I went with a Alliance friendly carnival.

I had myself wondering next:

How can I have a job where Kaylee comes along to originally be part of it that would also be okay with Inara and Mal?

Well... Junk ship parts are likely decommissioned parts, and deemed illegal to use to build ships over safety concerns at the very least.

I wasn't sure if that part was clear enough.

But... That was the implied with the smallish junk pile around Mayer’s unconscious body.

Also...

For designing looks of planets, ships, etc. throughout the episodes of Can't Take the Sky From Us? It was rustic and classic video game old fashioned style all the way(which, in a screwball kind of way, fit very well with designs of the planets, ships, etc. in the first run of episodes on Firefly).

Yes: Even down to the junk ship parts.

I added in how legal marriage proceedings work in the Guild.

Especially with the possibilities of being a lover or a Personal Companion shown through Inara in some episodes(and nothing to the contrary)? I figured it was a good middle ground for it all.

I originally was going to take a break from Saffron appearing.

But...

It's a Christmas episode:

I couldn't not have Inara and Saffron appear in the episode.

And...

The more I thought about a "Reaver-centric" story that could be a Christmas episode(a idea for a episode Joss Whedon seemed to like)? The more I thought "why don't I just combine both of the aforementioned episode ideas to write this episode?"

Yeah: Reaver costumed extremists is not really the same.

But... it was much better than the first draft I thought of for writing this episode.

Aside from the annoying realization I had that it takes more time for me to write Season 2 episodes going forward than I originally thought I would? I liked writing every part of the episode.

I especially liked writing the Christmas skit, all of River's scenes after the teaser, Saffron and Jayne's scenes together over the Cortex, and the gift giving.

I even turned to a random name generator to make sure who would have a gift for who would be random.

Well... Except for Jayne's gift to Saffron(but, that's pretty obvious for why).

I liked screwing with expectations with Alliance Police Captain Hollings.

He came across as a mostly perfect Santa's helper or Christmas toy soldier come to life...only for him and his men to assume it's a trap and run for it as soon as they saw drugged Zoe and Jayne shooting at Mal in a drugged up rage.

With Zoe?

Well... Zoe is getting too hard on herself:

Because she wants to do everything herself, and in a right way to not be careless again in her own hate for The Alliance and her own selfishness. She also wants to prove herself worthy to Mal again.

Zoe didn't give Jayne much a chance to catch up in time to really help. That in turn leads to Jayne and her getting kind of easily taken down and drugged.

Then, in the hall...

Zoe is saved from herself in more ways than one.

The implied is she finally realizes that she shouldn't have to do everything herself to make things right:

That there can be a balance between it and thinking of herself.

There is one thing I've yet still to finally get around to from what was originally going to be in Better Days, Part 2.

But... It was a good call to put it instead in the episode Those Left Behind.

Those Left Behind was not going to end on a happy note.

But... Before that comes?

At least Mal and his crew got to have happy holidays on Serenity.

That night is very likely where the better days end for the Serenity crew for a long time. But, they're not gone forever.

Also...

No: River's gift to Mal and/or Inara wasn't random.

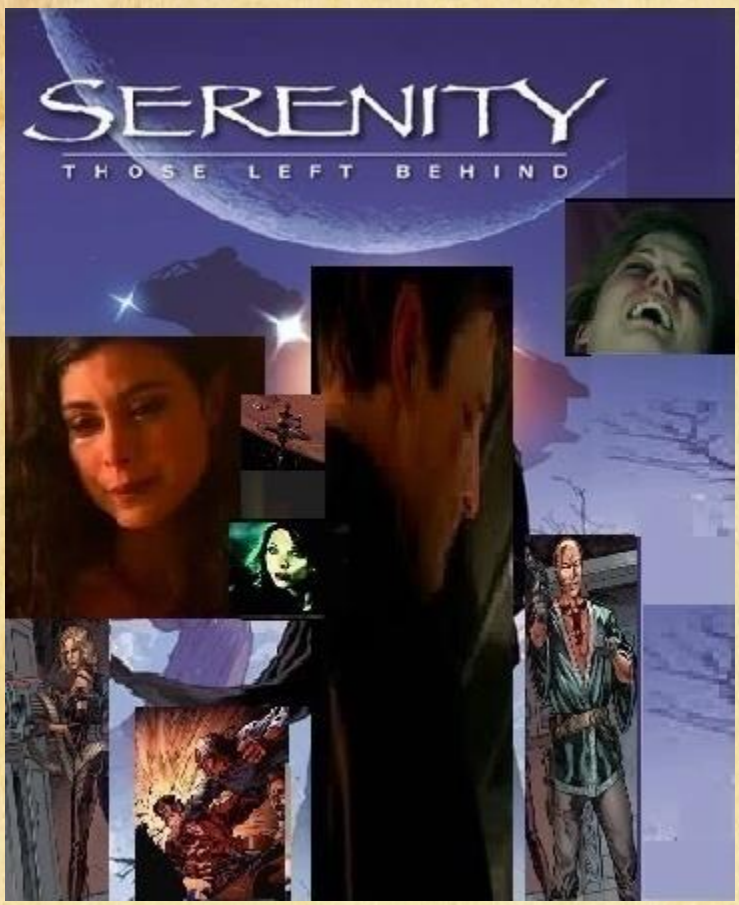
That was planned.

But... Since origami doesn't cost much money to make?

River could still have drawn someone else.

I happened to randomly draw Simon as the one who River would have drawn.

So... It became a nice callback to River forgetting to get him anything for his birthday in the episode Out of Gas.



Those Left Behind

a episode based on most of the comic mini-series Those Left Behind called Those Left Behind; but leave the Badger and Hands of Blue parts in the comic for another episode under a different name

1) Kalliav Niska = Niska's young wife/apprentice, who was trained up until Niska's death how to run and make a crime syndicate

--> Niska "finally met her" before they married(as in in the words of Shan Yu) and practically turned her into his slave; but the even creepier part of it is Kalliav was told exactly what to expect if she came into his crime syndicate and she was happy to(no overwhelming debts to pay, no blackmail as far as she was concerned)

--> when Kalliav's nephew found out she was with Niska, he had dinner with her and Niska; tried to talk Kalliav out of staying(it was her first few weeks with Niska)

--> but her nephew was a young man who wasn't very good at hiding his feelings; Niska got a earful at dinner, he told Kalliav to drug him as a test to prove her loyalty to him, and Kalliav was creepily happy to(the full story of what was implied from the episode The Train Job)

--> shortly after that, then Niska started to "finally meet her"

--> watched Niska's torture sessions through a hidden security camera in Niska's Skyplex, and watched Niska's defeat by Saffron and Jayne on a hidden camera onboard Niska's ship(near the end of the Dead or Alive 2-parter)

2) (from the episode War Stories) security cameras in the docking bay in Niska's Skyplex were still online the whole time; which is how Niska saw what River is capable of(killing several of his men while not looking) and signs of her being pained at what she just did(knowing she really rattled and shocked Kaylee)

3) in turn, Niska told Kalliav this was a good time to come out of hiding(just when he was running away from Mal's crew); to take advantage of River's pained state of mind and slip past her mind reading, while taking advantage of Mal's crew's hospitality to help her get to "know the real them"

4) after Mal's crew dropped Kalliav off to supposedly start a new life with independent work away from slavery, she'd come back to Niska

5) Niska though felt he was not prepared for the Serenity crew around the time he was defeated(or from a lone commandeered ASREV for that matter), and he put Kalliav in a escape pod in case to ensure she can restart his crime syndicate in his absence or death(so she got away completely undetected by Saffron and Jayne)

6) when Niska was brought to the Alliance for the bounty, The Alliance killed him; Kalliav has been planning revenge on Saffron and the rest of the Serenity crew since, choosing only weeks after the Better Days 2-parter to

strike(when the Serenity crew were rich, she finally finished her research on them from the shadows[enough to plan her revenge])

7) Kalliav Niska has nasty reddish scars down her hands, neck, back of her head, and ankles; but she doesn't like to cover them up either

--> looks kind of frail at first(but is just as physically fit as Inara); metal cuffs around Kalliav's hands with the chain links melted off that almost look like bracelets; yet, she has well polished red painted nails and doesn't smell at all(at least when she isn't covered in blood)

--> favors a wicked big knife in hand to hand combat; has two Taser styled blackened mostly dark brown handguns that have some electrically charged kick to the bullets, thanks to electrical circuit filaments purposely left open from within the handguns that course with a electrical current when the trigger is pressed(her own sadistic design)

8) The Councilor/Rena, Councilor of the planet Ezra(from the episode War Stories; a hostage of Kalliav Niska)

+ Eli Sandutsa(from Ghosts in the Black; mobile assistive bars around to help him move instead of exoskeleton[very similar to Private Declan's mobile assistive bars from the Dead or Alive 2-parter episode])

(held hostage in other direction at the same time)

+ Saffron(who Kalliav also tries to hold hostage with the restarted Niska crime syndicate, but is very much implied to likely have failed to hold her hostage[or Saffron would be just quick enough to reach Jayne just before she would be held hostage and the Serenity crew would know about it])

9) even though Saffron is safe, Serenity wouldn't get there in time to save both; which is Kalliav's revenge(the sheer pain of having to choose who is left behind and dies, and living with the guilt[but dividing and killing them one by one would be a plus])

10) Mal tries to make the choice for everyone, thinking The Councilor at the Skyplex is likely already dead because of how easy Kalliav could and how even more sadistic or cruel Kalliav could be than Niska(because of being creepily reminded of Saffron and her backstory)

11) Inara is hurt, refusing to just stand by and let the Councilor die; storms off for her shuttle to get her back, despite Mal's overwhelming concern for her safety

12) in the midst of the arguing, Mal brings up Book's past to try to end the argument then and there; Book punches him over it

13) after a tense silence, Book says he'll talk to Inara

14) and Book ultimately goes with Inara to protect her without telling Mal(which in his mixed feelings frustrates him)

15) Inara and Book go to Niska's Skyplex to rescue the Councilor, and find Kalliav there; Kalliav was interestingly expecting Mal to choose to rescue The Councilor instead because of "his weakness for young girls"(from Niska's research on the Serenity crew, going as far back as the episode Our Mrs. Reynolds)

16) and the rest of the Serenity Crew go up against Ott(a part of the restarted Niska crime syndicate)

17) names for Ott's / Kalliav's gang(weren't named before in the comic mini-series Those Left Behind)

[1] Twein = has two throwing knives and heavily tattooed

--> killed by Jayne in Those Left Behind

[2] Tyrus = muscular big man with a black machine gun with a tube down it

[3] Katen = the curly blond haired woman with the very dark blue machine gun(kind of shown before in the shadows when talking to Kalliav)

--> (notable Chinese sayings in Those Left Behind[when Kalliav finds out Saffron escaped]) Bǎ tāmen gǎo dé yītuánzāo = screw them all in hell

18) Inara leaves the crew, but not because of feeling Mal kind of cheated on her

--> after Book punches Mal down, almost gets in a fight with Mal, and leaves, Inara becomes more fearful of her being next; and so, Inara leaves soon after(especially in light of already knowing by now Mal's darkest sin and how dark he can truly be because of it); ~~Mal tries to calm her down, but it only makes it worse for both of them~~

--> before Inara leaves though, she makes sure to point out to Mal that Zoe is the most likely member of his crew that can handle being around his darker side and keep him in check(even though Zoe still doesn't know Mal's darkest sin); which Mal has very mixed feelings about(in light of Zoe's arms deal in the 2-parter Better Days), because he really doesn't want Zoe to cross the same lines Private Declan had(and end up having to shoot her to stop her like with Private Declan)

OR

--> (possibly?; scrapped) she has a baby, and Mal naturally thinks that's crazy(that raising a baby on the Firefly is too much to afford, but mostly because he's really not a father figure in the slightest

--> (possibly?; related to second possibility above)

that also kind of pisses off Zoe since after the episode Heart of Gold she wanted a child with Wash; but she's mostly still honor bound to Mal, and so she feels she "owes him too much to get in his way"

--> so Wash is naturally also kind of pissed at Mal for it; yet he fully realizes where Mal is coming from, and feels it would be best to have a child someday when they can all finally relax(no more running)

19) (at this point; thought of this idea for Jayne and Saffron reuniting)

(possibly?) after revisiting the episode The Message and reuniting with Saffron, Jayne brings his orange knit hat with the earflaps; much to Saffron's amused look

--> but to her, he's just "playing a part"; which she doesn't see as a bad thing, but leaves Jayne mighty confused until she explains it simply to him

---

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Those Left Behind]

I kept most everything from the Those Left Behind comic mini-series. But, I added more to most everything to fit better with previous episodes and the characters.

I put aside a big part of it for a later episode. Instead, I added in the Niska's wife twist.

It was a completely original twist by me. But, that wasn't for shock value.

I had some trouble writing how Inara was going to ultimately decide to leave in Can't Take the Sky From Us.

And... Here are my reasons why:

1) Originally, Inara was already set on leaving by the end of the episode Heart of Gold. Those Left Behind was set just before she was to officially leave.

2) Inara and Mal already got into heated fights over Inara having friends in The Alliance and tense disagreements over being more or less business like in previous episodes(before Can't Take the Sky From Us). Yet, they've been close up to now.

That doesn't leave much reasons left for them to get in a heated fight over.

So...

I went with a hostage situation where they likely can't go back to save both. A hostage situation where one of them could very well be left behind(yet they're both really important from the past to certain members of the crew).

If nothing else? It took the whole crew to go after Niska's syndicate and try to rescue Mal.

Splitting the crew up to save both at the same time sounds like suicide in light of that.

But... Of course?

Inara can't leave a friend behind: Even if it does kill her.

She also isn't the only one on the crew who would have very similar thoughts.

Along these lines? The first thought that came to me for the villain(s) was Niska's syndicate(and their Skyplex).

Then... I remembered Niska mentioned he had a wife.

And... It took off from there.

Also...

I liked writing River being mostly cheerful.

But...

Yeah: It's implied near the end of the episode that that's not going to last.

Yes: Mal's deep dark secret was planned by me from the start of Can't Take the Sky From Us.

The blurred image fading to Inara?

It was implying Inara reminded him quite a bit of Elle...and that maybe that's why he's been so quick before to call Inara a whore like it's second nature(or for Mal calling other Companions whores for that matter).

That wasn't the only reason I thought this backstory fit all too well with Mal. But, it's a big part of it.

Inara letting Kalliav live may not be a smart idea. But, I think it's how Inara would act afterwards.

On lighter notes...

Ott's gang was already originally in Those Left Behind.

I just added names, made them part of Kalliav Niska's syndicate, and revised and added lines for them.

The assistive bars unit parts were added for both Katen and Eli.

But... They both already had very similar looking things to carry.

Giving Katen a assistive bars unit was just to fit better with previous episodes here.

Also...

I wanted to find a character that already exists, that would be tied into Mal's and Zoe's past that isn't a soldier, and very likely couldn't escape on his or her own. So, I went with Eli Sandutsa.

His debts and promises paid very much implies the RPG adventure he appeared in in the campaign book Ghosts in the Black.

I purposely set the episode after that RPG adventure to leave it up in the air about who helped Eli pay off a certain debt or promise beforehand:

Because regardless of if someone played as the Serenity crew or not in said adventure? It still works then.

And... Yes:

Katen in the original comic does resemble Saffron quite a bit.

Episode Front Cover Disclaimer: Any original characters of mine that appear here can be any ethnicity really; pictures of them in these episode front covers otherwise look for sure as they are pictured here

Riverfront

a episode titled Riverfront;

with the Serenity crew visiting the Earth-That-Was holographic museum and trying to steal a globe of the Earth-That-Was, while River is back on the verge of having mental episodes and struggling to keep up a calm front to everyone else around her

1) River continues to seem mostly happy(since after getting albums of calming music for Christmas); despite shaking and shivering from having nightmares in her sleep more and more often(that it's gotten to be every other night and not just shivering some)

2) with her genius, River herself knows it's a sign her brain is getting worse again; but she wants to function like a normal girl so much that she doesn't tell anyone(nor does she want to think much about that she's getting worse again; very quick to assume it's just nightmares while she's sleeping and nothing else)

3) after a lot of convincing from Kaylee, Mal, and River herself, Simon lets River go to the shindig in the Londinium Museum so she can prove she can function like a normal girl and try to have friends outside of the Serenity crew that are more her age(with Kaylee as her "chaperone")

--> Simon trusts Kaylee and River to the point that he decides to stay on Serenity(bittersweetly knowing Kaylee took care of River when he couldn't in the episode After Burner); he's not really big on high society art for the most part

4) but, when River walks off to a ~~nearby~~ gallery with a somewhat bored teenage boy ~~or girl~~ named Jaime for a little tour, he or she starts to think she's crazy

5) Jaime Gosling

[1] likes swimming in his apartment complex's vertical public pool; but deep down wants to be free to have a pool all to himself(and maybe a special someone)

[2] somewhat logically pessimistic; at least partly out of bitterness of always being watched by Alliance security systems

[3] doesn't like riverfronts or rivers much; thinks they're too open ended and therefore "without a lasting end"

[4] likes being free, but not too open ended; gets bored kind of easily and always wants directness

[5] usually shy around girls(especially around one he likes)

-->(kind of scrapped and kind of not)he ~~or she~~ warns he ~~or she~~ is going to tell on River if she gets him ~~or her~~ in trouble, and River for a few seconds is seeing things; seeing him ~~or her~~ as one of the scientists that experimented on her

6) River takes out the teenage boy ~~or girl~~; and she realizes in horror that it was just seeing things

7) she fast walks off, trying to hold back tears and failing

--> Kaylee goes after her to try to keep up, only for a Alliance Operative to come after her and demand to know where Jayne is(and whoever else he might be working for now)

8) River later lies to the crew that she read the teenage boy's ~~or girl~~'s mind, and found out that he ~~or she~~ was paid by a close friend of his or her family that's in Alliance Intelligence to alert The Alliance if he or she sees her; and that taking him ~~or her~~ out was better than killing him ~~or her~~ over it

--> but of course, by the end of the episode, Simon sees right through River's lies; knowing his sister that well

--> that night, Simon gets very angry; telling River he saw right through it, that he doesn't know anymore if he can really trust her again, that he's going to tell the crew, and that he's sending her to Inara without him if she keeps trying to put up this front(not because he doesn't care for her; but because he knows too well she needs mental help, even if it means giving River over to Inara to decide her fate)

--> (related to above[1]; to reveal for the next episode; done) Simon tells Kaylee and Mal early the next morning; while Zoe and Wash were sleeping, and Simon certainly wouldn't directly talk to Jayne unless he felt he had to

--> (related to above[2]; to reveal for the next episode; done) but Mal, wanting to protect his crew, keeps it quiet(at least for now); while Kaylee wants to give River one more chance by helping her find a cure to her mental episodes(much to Simon's chagrin)

9) proscriptus man; River's other name for Mal

[1] similar to River's other name for Book; preacher man

[2] proscriptus = outlaw in Latin; also a callback to River's remark on Mal's name in the episode Train Job

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) two generations in generational arks; at least that's a popular theory(see under deleted scene for Riverfront for more info)

10) easter egg for the episode Riverfront(inside a matte painting); the grainy red toolbox from the 2013 short film Inside the Box(which also starred Summer Glau)

11) inspiration for some of Riverfront

[1] a globe of the Earth-That-Was for a episode; a scrapped idea for the McGuffin for the episode Trash

[2] Inside the Box(2013)

[3] the character Andy Goode from Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles

[4] Top 50: Scariest PSAs; posted by HelloImAPizza on Youtube

[5] The Best Riverfront Cities in the World; by Brain Johnson from traveller dot com dot au on July 8 2016

12) symbolism around Alliance society clearer in certain season 2 episodes, including this episode; but present in both seasons of Can't Take the Sky From Us

--> The Alliance has been big on democratic cooperation(so long as it's cooperation with the government[aka themselves]) to the point of putting restoration of lost works of art, music, TV episodes, and movies across The-Earth-That-Was from centuries ago as a high priority

--> but, with so many people across the Verse barely getting by on odd jobs or barely keeping up with the middle class jobs, no one in the Alliance has had time for making new art, music, TV, or movies(and everyone on the Outer Planets simply don't have the technology available and turn to plays and music instead)

--> symbolic of not being able to really live “in a better world free from sin”, despite how clean and comfortable it is in the Core Planets of The Alliance

--> (related to above[1]) despite how comfortable the middle class and upper class are, even they feel there’s something missing from their lives

--> (related to above[2]) but they’re so wrapped up in restorations and Companions that they can’t bring themselves to figure out what it is

There are 3D printed restorations of Aztecan and Babylonian tapestries on stone slabs with only some missing pieces of tapestry, Native American quilts with over 200 patches of brightly red and orange to dark yellow suns and moons, French quilts with outlined red roses, gold lined glass cases with fancible and not so fancible metal chairs and canister covered tables from the days of the Exodus from the Earth-That-Was, and matte paintings of light gray saucer space stations with spear like towers and of lunar monorails reminiscent of the Earth-That-Was from 1960's to 1980's.

Several wavecasters are gathered around a large metallic circular table with a holographic screen: With black Alliance dedicated source boxes ready to broadcast a restoration the next morning.

From several 3D printed restorations in Europe... The Londinium Museum is halfway to restoring everything about Lyon, France for the historical records.

Just rediscovering the invention of the cinematograph got Alliance historians in Londinium excited. There's a big shindig being held in honor of it in the wide open lobby.

But... There's no dancing: Only small talk and polite laughter around the table, roasted tubers with beef, crackers, cheese dip, chocolate dip, and sugar cookies on small ceramic plates.

13) more Alliance worlds and get to go to the surface; clean and sterile, very uniform and devoid of much creativity, echoing of a endless polished observation deck with dome lights

--> (from the episode Like Well Water)

glass domes for houses similar to the ships to kind of “over-protect” the environment for the Core Planets; where you can control the temperature, humidity, the color of the lights, the music or DVD playing from a very uniform iPod like miniature tower of a record player(iPod like part though mostly scraped), and even the wind fans

inside(which is the Alliance version of a vacuum cleaner[after cable tethering all the breakables and what not down before turning it on])

--> but broadcasts are only from the Alliance(no one else, and nothing but the news); anything else has to be gotten from DVDs or record players(or similar)

14) holographic schematics for restoration have also been a high priority(which is also why even The Alliance have holographic technology onboard their ships)

--> Under the Archival Directorate and the Restoration Directorate... Green grid covered holographic schematics on black screens and coffee machine styled pale tan 3D printer terminals for Earth-That-Was parts to assemble and solder together for restoration have been a high priority. Even bridges of Tohoku Class city ships come equipped with them.

In Wetware and War

the episode In Wetware and War;

spun off from the Firefly RPG Game Corebook(under the Further Adventures possibilities for The Message episode section)

1) Mal and Zoe get captured by the Triad(not Kaylee); Stanton seems to have turned against them, leading to their capture

--> but it turns out later on Stanton has gained the Triad's trust well enough to be left alone to guard Mal and Zoe; so that Stanton can free Mal and Zoe, give them access to retrieve their organs in their escape, and turn on the Triad to cripple the Triad when the

time is right for that big score(only Stanton ends up feeling too guilty to escape with Zoe and Mal because of the murders he's done to get to the top in the Triad, and kills himself)

--> but also partly to ensure the Triad's private lines over the Cortex are crippled with a virus from a data stick(that will carry over shorting out the Cortex screen on one end to all other Triad Cortex screens; crippling the Triad's network and leaving them fairly easy to be picked off by The Alliance in the long run)

2) meanwhile, Jayne doesn't want to be captain of the crew and tries to leave it in Wash's hands(who is just as reluctant as he is to be captain because of usually being nervous at the sight of blood); Simon kind of wants to be captain, but feels he'd be too in over his head over what to do right now with everything because he's not nearly as good with tactics as Jayne, Zoe, or Mal are

3) and River is planetside on a nearby planet with Kaylee ~~and/or Simon~~, trying to contact a member of the underground resistance(Agent Mrs. Spiral) against The Academy in a arranged meeting(aka tied to the Hands of Gray + Hands of Blue) to try to help the resistance(and double as trying to find a lasting cure for River's mental episodes)

--> do you know where I can find Academy Prime?; the code words from Mrs. Spiral to let the Serenity crew know it's her(also a inside joke at the Further Adventures idea Deep Underground[also a Hellbound episode Easter egg]; the mobile Academy base in it is called Academy Prime)

--> (for a later episode; for the episode Hellbound) the dedicated Source Box Mrs. Spiral gives them can locate other Alliance dedicated Source Boxes like it in Sunner range; with triangulation of their signals, it can locate a base of The Academy and give coordinates for it(the trickiest part though is to know where in the Verse to start looking)

4) original terms from the episode In Wetware and War

Thiopanuryis = a strong barbiturate(a kind of pharmaceutical drug) for inducing a coma(used by Alliance doctors on site for extreme cases to keep a patient unconscious for

several hours through and after a surgical procedure[to have him or her recover from near death]; or cryogenic preservation of a patient as a last resort for brain cancer)

--> (related to above[1]) Simon combined thiopanuryis + dilaftin for him and River to temporarily be in a coma to sneak into a Alliance hospital in the episode Ariel

(with dilaftin significantly lowering the time taken to wake up while appearing to be dead[much like byphodine])

--> (related to above[2]; at least implied) combining thiopanuryis and dilaftin is also illegal; the biggest side effect of combining them is making a patient's temperature spike up and down to try to regulate the body; the temperature spikes can persist for several hours through and after a coma induced state(making some people get a fever or get nauseous and dizzy when they first wake up; if there's preexisting conditions for a patient, there's a fifty to seventy percent chance of sudden death shortly after taking thiopanuryis and dilaftin)

5) notable Chinese saying(s) from the episode In Wetware and War

[1] [with past Saffron]

tā mā de húndàn de cāngyíng = fucking bastard children of the flies

[2] [with Wash admitting his dark secret to Jayne]

Qīn'ài de, bù gāoxìng de shén = dear not happy god in Hell

[3] [with Mal finding River at the end of the episode]

bǎ wǒ tī dào suǒyǒu shénshèng de dǐbù = kick me in the bottom of all that is sacred

(combining two of Mal's Chinese sayings from previous mainstream Firefly episodes into one)

6) The Triad = a criminal organization in units of three; one a enforcer disguised in Alliance police or town elder clothing, one the hired gun or backup disguised in Alliance police or town elder "lawyer" clothing, and one that's legally a wife or husband to the enforcer(who personally reports back to the Triad if something goes wrong)

--> they specialize in organ trade; but they also steal credits and pin the warrant on a innocent man or woman, and coerce and lead away teenage runaways that have temporarily slipped through the cracks of Alliance security to become part of their organization in a few years time; not even the Alliance knows for sure how long ago the Triad started their organization

--> one of their bases is a neighboring town's chief elder's office near the Maiden House from the episode Our Mrs. Reynolds

7) Triad members past --> Lieutenant Rooker

8) Triad members present in In Wetware and War --> (killed)Brent Wyant(hired gun), Morin(legal husband to Kevin), (killed)Deros(corrupt Allied Border Enforcement officer), Larissa Kianto(legal wife of Elam Cassar), (killed)Stephanie Jones(corrupt Alliance police officer + legal wife to Deros), (at least very much implied; killed in fire)Elam Cassar(corrupt Alliance sheriff), (killed)Larosa(hired gun; but Larosa's gender purposely left up in the air), (killed)Kevin(corrupt Allied Border Enforcement officer), and Stanton double crossed the Triad as he planned(but, killed himself near the end of the episode In Wetware and War over guilt of the innocent people he's killed to get into the Triad to begin with)

9)making three units of the Triad in one place just to try to keep Mal and Zoe from escaping(with them being legendary)

10) the guns and the ships are designed to represent who wields them; even the guns and ships of The Alliance and of the more clear cut bad guys represent who they are

11) at least a episode where Wash gets to be a bad ass fighter/shooter

(~~?~~; done in the episode In Wetware and War)

12) at least several episodes with more BDSM and same sex friendly scenes

(for women and for men; including but not limited to some male Companions or a male Companion for at least a episode)

13) Wash's home planet --> Deadwood

--> (at least very much implied) named as such for the heavy pollution in atmo there, and for the dead or very harsh "governing"

14) Nandi's home moon --> New Omaha

--> one of Deadwood's moons(by default, it's the moon that isn't Haven; Nandi's moon is still a moon according to the episode Heart of Gold; while the Firefly Encyclopedia explicitly says Deadwood is Nandi's home planet, a moon around what's left of Deadwood makes more sense than doing a unnecessary retcon of the episode's script)

--> to reveal in the bonus episode After Miranda

15) (for a later episode) more on Haven

[1] one key hub for Browncoats "underground railroad"

[2] akin to Harriet Tubman's underground railroad in the American civil war, only with scattered settlements on Rim planets

[3] the mining settlement Book moves to isn't run by Browncoats, but they're allies with the Browncoats

[4] (possibly?) in Can't Take the Sky From Us, Haven isn't a moon, but a planet; away from Deadwood(and not so close to home for the Serenity crew)

16) in L.A Robarts's own words[on shooting locations for Firefly]

"the premise was a pretty interesting one. I love sci-fi, and it was also combined with a frontier setting, in which you went to these different planets and people rode horses and used guns - not ray guns.

We weren't looking for a whole lot of hi-tech buildings and hi-tech exteriors. We kept it much more open, out in the frontier regions, where the Serenity crew were shipping their trade. A lot of the stuff that we in the location department were looking for were old abandoned towns, vacant valleys, a lot of mines and just interesting terrain that you'd probably shoot more in a Western than you would normally think of in sci-fi. We were looking for really interesting, otherworldly geography that could be on some remote planet somewhere."

--> yet for the episode Ariel, most of the exteriors were in Century City(by the Twentieth Century Fox lot); and for the episode Trash, it was mostly shot in the Japanese Garden in Van Nuys, California

(there have been some notable exceptions to L.A. Robarts's locations)

--> in L.A. Robarts's own words[for season 2?; not really picked up on, but maybe just one time?]:

"I went for a big scout out there, thinking that we would be using a lot of that stuff. I'm sure that had we gone another season, if it had been picked up, we probably would have gone to a lot of really interesting areas out towards Death Valley, because there's some *really* otherworldly places out there, which would have been great to shoot."

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for In Wetware and War]

I wanted to finally do a episode around the Triad.

Weirdly enough(and as far as I know)? They were only given a name in the Firefly RPG game corebook.

But... That was under that episode section for The Message.

I also wanted to finally get around to setting up the Serenity crew going after The Academy.

Yes: That was yet to come at the time.

There wasn't much about the Triad's organization. So, all of that was completely original.

I purposely gave the Triad members detailed appearances to show how diverse and spread out they are.

I had trouble figuring out who would get captured by the Triad:

Because I really wasn't sure who besides Mal would fit and not come across as too disturbing.

Plus... Mal already went through torture with Niska and broke himself free without a hint of breaking down on the inside.

Then... It all finally hit me:

What if Mal and Zoe are both captured because of someone they thought was still on their side catching them kind of easily...only for it to turn out he was going to cripple the Triad and free Mal and Zoe to begin with?

It wasn't so much that they got captured that was a big deal after all:

It was the two side stories and Mal's hard learned lesson in what he could become.

In the Firefly RPG game corebook? Elder Gommen's story seemed to me to be too much at odds with itself.

I felt this story with the Triad behind the scenes all along there was a much more satisfying and twisted twist.

I originally wasn't going to even have a scene with Saffron in the past talking to the Triad. But, I felt the episode needed it to show truth out of Saffron's lies around the episode Our Mrs. Reynolds.

Also...

I know the episode Riverfront wasn't much kind to Jayne or River.

But... It was a big part to building up to the end of the episode In Wetware and War(where River's episodes get worse all over again).

I wanted to show more of what River is like past the mental episodes before it fully got worse all over again(likes, dislikes, etc.)...which makes it all the more heartbreaking(in both the episode Riverfront and the episode In Wetware and War).

On another note...

Around the end of last year... I bought and read through the Firefly Encyclopedia.

In that book? Wash's backstory seemed to very much be what I put in the present sense.

I like the idea of Jayne and Wash becoming more understanding toward each other all over again:

Like they're brothers, but maybe not like little brothers anymore.

Also...

I wanted at least a episode in Can't Take the Sky From Us where Wash gets to be badass.

That turned out to be more funny than I originally thought. But, it seemed to fit very well for Wash.

(< More Possible Episodes for Season 2 >)

1) novel(s) that could also count as episodes under this Season 2; Firefly: Life Signs(within the 2 weeks part of Better Days, Part 1)

--> to still have the novel Firefly: Life Signs fit with the continuity of Can't Take the Sky From Us, there's several big changes

[1] with Inara keeping her backstory from the episode Like Well Water(along with her medical condition epidplasa); Kiehl's Myeloma isn't a medical condition for her

[2] Simon discovers from his medical research that the cure for Kiehl's Myeloma(a 26th century cancer epidemic) is very likely the final key to creating a temporary cure for Inara's epidplasa; but only River can find who to turn to for help in finding the cure for Kiehl's Myeloma(a disgraced scientist incarcerated for life on the prison planet Atata); up until this point, Kiehl's Myeloma has been considered incurable(that part is unchanged from the novel)

[3] there's plenty of flashbacks to when the Serenity crew already found out about Inara's medical condition(between the episodes Like Well Water and Devil's Work Knows No Rest)

[4] the Alliance prison system from Can't Take the Sky From Us doesn't even know about the prison planet Atata, because it's a little known Alliance Intelligence secret; Alliance Intelligence very selectively picks prisoners not much anyone in the Verse would care about to send to Atata to die a slow death(and for some privately contracted Alliance agents to run unethical studies on how fast people can be psychologically broken for interrogation[more like Agent Dobson than Hands of Blue])

[5] in light of Mal missing in action within the two weeks part of Better Days, Part 1, Inara over everyone else's objections helps Simon, River, and everyone else on the Serenity crew break into the prison and get the cure for Kiehl's Myeloma

[6] with no guards on Atata for Inara to disguise herself as(that part unchanged from the novel), Inara disguises herself as a woman prisoner who's been locked up on Atata for years(with help from some underground tricks and a underground connection up Book's sleeve[in the early formation of Inara's and Book's spy network, as revealed in the episode Havens of Two Roads])

[7] by or near the end, Inara escapes from the prison along with Simon, River, and everyone else on the Serenity crew(and the 2-parter Better Days continues on unchanged)

2) [at the point of writing the episode Deck the Halls of Dōngjì; thought of this idea for a episode]

(scrapped) a episode with a driven crazy scientist(s) from River's "psychic unit" coming after her(see under notes for Heart of Gold Revisited in Can't Take The Sky From Us Companion Book, Volume 1 for more info)

3) more possible ideas for later episodes in Season 2 of Can't Take the Sky From Us from Firefly RPG books (not all of them became episodes though)

[1] from Firefly RPG Game Corebook;

under Further Adventures for mainstream episodes

--> (<Ariel>)

Deep Underground(to combine with Ghosts in the Black)

[Deep Underground became part of the episode in Wetware and War and part of the episode Hellbound]

--> (<The Message>)

War Chest

[War Chest became the episode In Wetware and War]

--> (<Objects in Space>)

Vertigo;

Winston Zhao;

Oh, Crap(seen Jubal coming back for revenge[that part done in the 2-parter episode Better Days], but might have a final fight on the remnants of Shadow in another episode)

[2] from Firefly RPG Book Echoes of War: Thrilling Heroics

--> (<Shooting Fish>)

not likely to do a whole episode around, but maybe at least some of the characters can star in a episode

(scrapped; because no characters in this adventure fit for a episode of Can't Take The Sky From Us anyway)

[3] from Firefly RPG Book Ghosts in the Black

--> [became the episode Hellbound] to turn into a episode around the Academy that experimented on River(~~at least~~ <Chapter Seven: The Big Dark> + <Chapter Six: The Hellhound Trail>); combined with the Further Adventures idea Deep Underground

4) [this was originally going to be a season 2 episode; but to save instead for a Firefly Online single player campaign episode(set in Firefly, season 1) for Wash(when he is still alive, and Inara and Book are still on Serenity as members of the Serenity crew)]

thought of having a episode loosely based off of one of Alan Tudyk's episode ideas titled Slaves to the Night No More, with a high society woman that is secretly a slaver's wife looking for servants to sell to strip in a underground club("I need some strippers for a client; got any?"); two members of the Firefly crew go undercover to volunteer for the job to take down the slaver from the inside of his operations, while Zoe

with Mal, Wash, Inara, and/or Jayne come as backup for the inevitable shootout coming; Wash almost volunteers to go undercover as a stripper, but Zoe of course makes him back away by reminding him of her being his wife and that she'd kill him if he does volunteer

5) more possible ideas for later episodes in Season 2 from the short stories collection from Still Flying

[1] What Holds Us Down by Jane Espenson(takes place just before the movie Serenity)

-{1}- Kaylee doesn't like being physically light headed for the most part(which is made worse if there's a lack of gravity generation); if Kaylee is in a medical daze or drunk, the light headedness she doesn't mind(like in the pilot 2-parter episode Serenity and in the episode Jaynestown)

-{2}- [spun off into Wash's big damn plan to try to stop Genradiation plant parts from being delivered to the planet Lazarus in the episode Blue Suns and Townsfolks]

Wash however really doesn't mind a lack of gravity generation(in fact, just the opposite; in his element)

-{3}- a Honnecourt Capacitor = "honey" (nickname for them)

--> a short, fat rod with copper rings around it

--> set to work in the damps, making it so the contents of the ship didn't float around; make the rotor of a Series One Firefly work

-{4}- there's floating junkyard(s) on grav dampeners

-{5}- *"simple machines for simple people."* (Kaylee)

-{6}- often when fixing things, Kaylee likes to play a game she likes to call "Kaylee is a electron" in which she's traced the interior mechanism in her head[places to be concerned; parts to check, connections to verify]

[2] Fun with Dick and Jayne by Ben Edlund

-{1}- Jayne's first knife was like a very crude rusty and solid rustic brown keyblade

-{2}- [spun off into a flashbacks part for Jayne in the episode Not So Set in DNA, and also inspired a certain scene with Jayne and Saffron in Part 2 of the 2-parter episode Better Days]

on Meat Raffles(expanded from above; already very much implied in the short story)

A grisly underground highly discriminative wrestling sport, where fat contestants tear each other apart with their bare hands until muscle is showing past the skin and fat(aka Meat Raffle); homeless or not(but homeless fat contestants only get to compete in the Hobo Matches for half as much in the betting pools unless they're exceptionally fat, while the fat contestants in the Home Matches get more in the betting pools)

--> the loser is left for dead meat to be turned into black market dead corpses to toss to Reavers to buy time to get away(or into black market lubricant from the fat), and the winner gets to cash it in for himself

--> with a arena with crude stone oven like walls with dark red curved out bolted in planks and matching rim, which may or may not have wire fences nearby

--> it's rare for a fat woman to compete, but it has happened before; most women think it's distasteful and cruel

-{3}- Speshal Raygun = a hobo in the Meat Raffle with medium gray hair, bald on top, and KP3112 and a big C above it tattooed on his arm

-{4}- when growing up, Jayne had a easily nauseated and drunk friend named Dick with curly blond hair and a striped blue pajama like shirt; who helped bag up stray dogs and pigs they catch, even with how easily nauseated he gets at the sight of blood

-{5}- Jayne and Dick got four credits for every stray they killed from Port Control(very much implying it's more than just a locking clamp; it's a department of The Alliance that manages locking clamps)

-{6}- [spun off into part of inspiration for writing the episode Not So Set in DNA]

(at least implied in light of the above)even Kaylee, who sees Jayne like a brother, is very uneasy about Meat Raffles

--> fighting for pleasure gives Kaylee very mixed feelings no matter what; yet Kaylee thinks as long as the contestants are doing what they love and aren't forced into it, maybe it really isn't her place to judge harshly about it

[3] Crystal by Brent Matthews

-{1}- when River doesn't eat before taking medication from Simon, she sees into the future all the clearer(which in turn can very much terrify her even more so)

-{2}- "*Crystal.*" (River; when she sees into the future all the clearer)

-{3}- [part of the inspiration for the episode Deck the Halls of Dōngjì]

(River's prediction on Zoe's future; very much implying for in the movie Serenity)

"you're going to be ok. It will seem impossible. It's almost going to break you. In the small hours, when no one's around... But, you're going to be ok."

-{4}- [not just part of inspiration for the scene with Inara and River in the episode Heart of Gold Revisited; also part of the inspiration for the episode Those Left Behind]

She [Inara] was more open minded than most, given her profession as a Companion. Was not one to hold a grudge [for long] against things that were not easily explained.

-{5}- [part of the inspiration for the flashback with Simon and Inara from the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess; with Simon talking to Inara about discovering a cure for her medical condition]

(when River asks Inara to ask her what she wants and she'll tell her)

Two questions formed in Inara's mind at once, so distinctly that they had faces. One was her own. The other familiar and handsome, if very stubborn. It occurred to her if she could only ask one, she didn't know which one she would choose...

And then the faces were gone, replaced by River's.

River was Inara's concern, not matters she had been too afraid to address with anyone - herself included - in far too long.

"stay here. I'm going to find Simon." (Inara)

"yes and no." (River)

Inara was at the door when she heard them. The answers to her questions, but in which order? One would happen. The other would not. The revelation brought relief, maybe even joy...

But only for a moment. The other possibility soon seeped in, became every bit as palpable. Regret and despair.

Inara turned back to say something, just in time to see River hit the floor.

--> the answers to Inara's questions

yes, Inara finds a cure for her condition long enough to explore most of the Verse(temporary cure or not); no, Inara can't help Mal find peace(Mal has to find peace within himself; also very much implying Mal finding something to believe in in the movie Serenity)

[4] Take the Sky by Jose Molina(set many years after the movie Serenity)

-{1}- [spun off into Act III of the bonus episode After Miranda; with some big differences]

at seventy years, Mal lives ~~alone~~ on a planet on the Rim in a wood house; ~~having denied a life of his own and realized too little too late that he lost it(and lost Inara)~~, and now reflecting on his long life and the lives of his crew as he reaches the end of his days

--> (~~mostly~~ Mal living alone part scrapped for sure, but might make it a nightmare for Mal to wake up from)

-{2} about Mal's time after the movie Serenity(to kind of scrap and kind of not)

--> *It [Serenity] no longer afforded Mal the anonymity he craved anyway. The ship was synonymous with "The Signal". With galaxy-shattering heroics no one man could or should have to embody.*

Once upon a time, Serenity had been a place of refuge for Mal. It was no longer that for him. It could still be that for Zoe.

Let her have the sky. They'd taken it from him.

-{3}- Jayne is not the only one to embrace being a celebrity

--> *after the events at Mr. Universe's complex, Jayne had been the only one to [really] embrace celebrity*

-{4}- Mal thinking back to Simon and Kaylee's kids and future life; after the movie Serenity(keep mostly the same)

--> *~~Mal forced himself to think happy thoughts~~. Kittens and bunnies, gorramit. Big fat babies. That was ~~better~~ more happy thoughts to Mal.*

Violet and Caleb Tam.

They were far from babies anymore, but that was still how Mal chose to remember them - the way they looked when Mal last visited Kaylee and Simon on Ariel.

Violet took after her mother. She was a sweet, kind little soul who exhibited heaps of confusion during the inevitable occasions when she made little Caleb cry. No matter how many times Kaylee asked her not to take apart his toys to see how they worked, little Violet couldn't help herself.

The three-year-old spent most of Mal's last visit trying to increase the nav-thrust on Caleb's tri-mobile by replacing its battery-powered motor with an internal combustion engine. Caleb spent most of the visit on his mother's lap.

The boy definitely took after his father. He was far tougher than he looked. Smart as a whip and stubborn as the day was long.

He'd go to bed only when he was tried, not because Kaylee "said so." He couldn't be convinced that it was beneficial to sleep at any time other than when one was, in fact, sleepy. Only Simon could get little Caleb to bed with the promise of reading him some doorstop of a book.

Ultimately, though, both kids had as much of River in them as they did their own parents. After all, it was River who spent the most time with them, sitting for the twins any time of day or night to accommodate for Simon and Kaylee's busy Cityfolk schedules.

And the twins loved their Auntie River. She'd hold cockroach races for them and tell them which one was going to win before they even started. She'd tell hour-long stories that would literally hypnotize them and make them believe they were part of the tale. She'd clean up scrapes with such vivid descriptions of the gruesome wars being waged by microscopic organisms inside their tiny bodies that the twins would forget the pain in lieu of being nauseous.

If Simon was brain and Kaylee was heart, then River was spirit. The Tam family was a confluence of all good things, and it eased Mal's [kind of] weary mind to think of them on some distant place far, far away from his desolate rock.

6) [this originally was going to be a season 2 episode; to save instead for a late season episode of Firefly Online, Season 1]

a episode titled Down to the Last Coin where the Serenity crew or another outlaw(s) go to rob a town bank on a Border planet or Rim planet; and it turns out a bunch of townsfolk get there first, who are being press ganged/forced into robbing the town bank by a real gang(who are keeping most of their loved ones hostage from a late night town meeting at the “closed for repairs” town hall)

--> (first part scrapped) a episode called Down to the Last Coin where the Serenity crew get a distress call wave from one of the townsfolk on a Border planet or Rim planet; and it turns out a bunch of townsfolk including him or her are being press ganged/forced into robbing the town bank by a real gang(who are keeping most of their loved ones hostage from a late night town meeting at the “closed for repairs” town hall)

--> and only the Serenity crew or another outlaw(s) can stop the bank robbery, get the townsfolk off planet to safety away from The Alliance affiliated town sheriff, free the hostages, and take down the real gang in time

--> this robbery though could be the beginning of many more; the real gang is planning to rob many town banks by press ganging many townsfolk into doing the robbing for them(in the midst of tense times, when most any sheriff would be quick to shoot first and ask questions later if they think someone is affiliated with a gang)

7) ~~(for season 2 finale?; not long before the Serenity movie)~~

(kind of scrapped and kind of not; to save instead for Firefly Online, Season 2)

a episode titled Into the Erebus; with a battleship like colony(living on one big lost, found, and then commandeered generational ark ~~[named the Erebus]~~ named the Sun Tzu away from the control of The Alliance) that the Serenity crew takes a little vacation on, until grave trouble threatens to tear the colony apart

--> the whole colony is left crippled or destroyed, ~~and so can't come in to help the Firefly crew in the Serenity movie~~

--> ~~also sharply reminding the Firefly crew they're on their own again(with Firefly on the verge of being destroyed by wear and tear alone), and that what happened to the colony could be what happens to them if they don't keep themselves together~~

--> combine this with the Free-For-All idea from the Firefly RPG core book + the Firefly novel with finding a generational ark(Firefly: Generations); Durran Haymer has also been looking for the generational ark named the Sun Tzu

--> The Academy escapee Silas from Firefly: Generations can either become a leader of the colony(however reluctantly he wants that role or not), or Silas for a time has been kept in a cryo-box in cryogenic stasis under lock and key by the colony out of fear of "unleashing a monster"(until the Hands of Blue wipes out most of the colony themselves, and some of the colonists have barely managed to hide in other parts of the generational ark to escape the Hands of Blue the first time around[but, these colonists and Silas are all operating on their own and are not united])

--> Durran Haymer is even ready with a bio-weapon in case a lot of people are in that generational ark(because he doesn't want anyone to stand in his way of taking the generational ark to add to his collection of artifacts); meanwhile, Hands of Blue are coming back to try to retake the generational ark the Sun Tzu

--> and Saffron sends a kind of last minute wave to Mal on Serenity to warn his crew that Durran Haymer and more Alliance forces are coming soon(but even Saffron doesn't know for sure if Hands of Blue are coming or not)

--> Saffron would much rather the generational ark doesn't fall into the hands of Durran than play Mal or Durran to get to it for herself(also in the hope of saving any innocent people onboard that generational ark)

Blue Suns and Townsfolk

A Wash focused episode titled Blue Suns and Townsfolk;

Blue Sun is developing a certain kind of power plant to try to make way for another try at the same kind of thing that ravaged Wash's home planet Deadwood, and they say they'll "make them great this time"

1) Wash was one of the lucky few who flew off of Deadwood in time

2) (mostly done, but explosives part kind of scrapped and kind of not)

without anything to prove Blue Sun is up to no good, Wash tries to sabotage Blue Sun's plans alone with explosives at their doorstep(all too quick to see them as bad guys)

--> which at least in the long run would very likely make everything worse, even if Blue Sun wouldn't be able to deliver on their promise(or if it's a false promise); even Mal practically says to Wash that his sabotage plans won't work

3) and only Zoe can stop Wash; who knows exactly what he's going through(because of Zoe herself getting close to the point of no return in the 2-parter episode Better Days)

4) Original terms from the episode Blue Suns and Townsfolk

[1] Genradiation Plant = a atmospheric processing plant that runs on extremely dangerous radiation for power, but theoretically could generate enough atmospheric processing speed to make any planet or any moon good for terraforming in decades; even a somewhat failed terraforming attempt on a Rim or Border planet into a Earth like planet in a decade(or a gas giant planet into a water planet in decades)

5) (related to above) twin Genradiation Plants in second stage testing sprung a small leak on Deadwood, and it wasn't until The Alliance reported on it and that there was nothing they could do years later that Deadwood was soon completely wiped out by accumulating dangerous radiation

6) The Alliance sees Genradiation Plants as the key to make up for past mistakes in terraforming the Rim and Border planets, and quite possibly persuade any resistance left against The Alliance away from resisting them with a lot more credits and richer resources across the Verse; as in if no one is financially poor anymore in The Alliance, The Alliance thinks that would mean the complete end of resistance since stretched thin credits and resources are a big part of what led to the Unification War to begin with(completely ignoring that some people are just going to hate regardless)

7) (at least implied) The Alliance liked Lazarus's military forces so much for their efficiency that they decided to have MPs of their own; with the same designs for Alliance MPs armor(but different colors)

--> (related to above) so The Alliance likely gets a lot of military recruits from Lazarus, who are "ideal for the good of The Alliance"

8) after talking to several of the local people on Lazarus, Wash makes his own way into Dora

9) he convinces someone at a government facility with a second level clearance(not at the top, but close enough) to secretly back him up for his plan; as a anonymous source; and since he or she would be using the same corner of the Cortex the Lazarus government regularly uses, The Alliance military would at first glance think it's fully authorized by The Alliance

10) not beep sounds on the show Firefly; chones(between chimes and tones)

11) Wash contacts the Lazarus government directly that someone through the Cortex sent him a hot tip on Saffron's or Kalliav's latest activities, and that the anonymous source said he or she would try to contact him again at Dora with more info in exchange for a thousand or so credits(but it's really just a way to get Wash escorted to Dora no problem)

--> the anonymous source gives Wash a bank account where the credits will go for him; but it's really disguising a manual override code for the Dora facility(which Wash gladly enters to get control of the Dora facility)

12) Wash opens both doors of the airlock, sucking out the air; taking out all the caught off guard military, while Wash grabs a spare air tank and mask off of one of them flying across the room

--> Wash uses the spare air tank and mask to still breathe himself

--> he seals the airlock; auxiliary life support kicks in

13) he starts to get to work using the military facility's own arsenal against the final shipment for starting up the twin Genradiation power plants on Lazarus; the Genradiation itself

14) if Wash blows up the Genradiation before it makes it to atmo on Lazarus's, then it'll set back The Alliance's power plants well enough to make The Alliance reevaluate if it's worth the risk

15) but, Wash's plan is already working too well; Wash is so caught up in his daydream of stopping the Genradiation power plants cold that he doesn't think to cover his tracks better with his "anonymous source", and so The Alliance sends some Tohoku class city ships and their attack ships to guard the Genradiation(which very likely means Wash's "anonymous source" was arrested and killed by The Alliance in the midst of it all, and that The Alliance let Wash try to continue his plan so they could catch him in the act and arrest him just before he can succeed[that second part of course though doesn't work out so well for The Alliance because of underestimating Wash])

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) Wash is so caught up in his daydream of stopping the Genradiation power plants cold that he doesn't think to hide his activity on the military facility over the Cortex, and so The Alliance sends some Tohoku class city ships and their attack ships to guard the Genradiation

16) Wash is about to do it anyway, trying to do a trick shot to still take out the Genradiation; but Zoe comes out of hiding and points her gun at him(trying to keep him from murdering several cities of innocent people onboard those Tohoku class city ships just to deal a mighty blow to the Genradiation power plants)

--> and Zoe succeeds at getting Wash to stand down; much to their mixed relief

--> then, they both escape in time through a shuttle; while the fallout from The Alliance shooting on the Dora facility ends up destroying the whole facility

Episode Front Cover Disclaimer: Any original characters of mine that appear here can be any ethnicity really; pictures of them in these episode front covers otherwise look for sure as they are pictured here

Not So Set in DNA

a episode around Kaylee titled Not So Set in DNA;

with mutant cattle and more(I explain on why down below)

1) the Serenity crew hasn't really been taking passengers or cattle for a whole month or so; not helping out much folks but themselves and big crime bosses

2) Kaylee is feeling depressed lately over that, and the Serenity crew is trying to cheer her up; which gets all the more complicated when the Serenity crew gets their first

job in a long while with taking a passenger(off the record of course, with the bounties still on their heads)

3) and the passenger is a neutral scientist named Davis Glick, coming with a highly concentrated formula that can give DNA bred cattle twice as much muscle without destabilization of the DNA(which would be dropped into highly concentrated liquidated DNA for DNA bred animals and then grown)

--> (related to above[1]) he's planning to sell it to the highest bidder; which is likely to be The Alliance from one world or another, but there's big crime bosses out there who might go for it for even more credits

--> (related to above[2]) he's even brought onboard six monster cattle as living proof of his highly concentrated formula; and eighteen crates of grass for grazing and twenty four crates of water just for the trip to and back

4) Joss Whedon really wanted to do a episode with mutant cattle or mutant horses(even though "no mutants, no aliens" is a big part of the show[one more exception to that; with River, in a way, already being a exception to "no mutants"])

5) even from the very idea of cattle with more muscle, Kaylee would have mixed feelings; because she's both quite welcoming of cattle taking on bigger jobs and loads so most folks wouldn't have to sweat "too" too much, and real terrified of the thought of more folks getting hurt by cattle(however unintentionally it is)

6) River has mostly mixed feelings like Kaylee; but also very much sympathizes with the monster cattle just wanting to survive and not trying to be mean(even being tempted to hug them and cuddle them)

7) and Jayne admires the formula for the monster cattle(with not much second thoughts about it)

8) meanwhile, River, being mostly okay, is piecing together some big clues on The Academy that she's picking up on the subconscious level(mostly fragments from earlier,

but present fragments are helping piece it all together); narrowing it down to four Sunner ranges next to each other

--> (related to above) leading into the next episode(Hellbound)

9) Kaylee's homeworld is Glacier

--> her homeworld wanted her back really badly; but Kaylee helped kind of calm things down there(while still staying on Serenity with the Serenity crew)

Some silent tears fall from Kaylee's face.

And... She is thinking to herself:

My daddy. He...he sent me a wave.

Heavy sigh.

Looks as though all of Glacier wants me back really badly.

Even wanting to get a Genradiation plant just to free me from my bounty from The Alliance.

Very faint chuckle.

Sure. It were really temptin'. What girl wouldn't get tempted by it?

But...but, I couldn't just leave my Captain without a mechanic.

Got family here with my girl much as I do out there on my homeworld Glacier.

I gave my daddy some pointers to give to everyone.

On the other hand though, that did seem to kind of calm things out there.

10) River comes to the cargo hold to try to help cheer up Kaylee big time; getting herself accepted in the herd so she and Kaylee can get up close to the monster cattle without incident

--> River even convinces Mal to give them time to themselves in the cargo hold by bringing up the syringe Kaylee still has in case River has another really bad episode; but also so River and Kaylee can get close to the cattle without others on the crew freaking out and assuming they're going to get hurt or something

11) River uses her dress from the episode Safe as a twisted bunched up rope with horn shaped ends ~~dance streamer~~ to harmlessly mock fight a monster bull and tire him out; showing herd dominance by winning the mock fight(destroying that dress of hers, but still)

12) then, River fake falls to impress the queen cow as well; showing she's not looking to challenge the queen cow much when she tries to get temperamental about it

13) soon, River is letting the same monster bull she defeated lick her(but, with her reactive impulses, River keeps making sure to move around him well enough to not be unintentionally hurt by his horns or head); and Kaylee is cuddling with two of the monster cows

14) then, Davis comes back wondering what's going on with all the cattle mooing; and River, sensing him coming a few minutes ahead of time, warns Kaylee

15) River and Kaylee say goodbye to the cattle; and they try to make a run for it(but Kaylee gets caught about running away by Davis, who confronts her about it)

16) Davis Glick

[1] eats quite a bit and works it off back home(but brings all of his food with him); to try to not to think too much of what his formula could be used for for bad

[2] (at least quite implied) Harvest is Davis's home world; doesn't hate his parents, but hates the lifestyle there

[3] (at least implied) he left to slip away from the magistrate there, because he thought he was too strict

17) when Kaylee just can't let her big question over the cattle go, Davis breaks down(but Kaylee wasn't trying to get him to break down)

--> he attacks her; but she slips away before he can hurt her

--> Davis sooner or later gets himself together again; after that, he doesn't attack anyone onboard

18) (very possibly?; done) Kaylee though, not able to bare the thought of a crime boss getting his or her hands on the formula, contacts The Alliance through a Telephonix

just before Serenity drops off Davis; with Serenity gone and with the money from the job before The Alliance even shows up to go after Davis

--> in light of Davis attacking her, Kaylee also hopes to convince well enough with time back with his family not to just hand over his formula to just anyone who pays more(or the mental help she thinks he needs) by telling The Alliance where he's going and where his family is

--> Kaylee takes out the visual feed with some tinkering in case(thanks to River's suggestion[that part at least implied at least a little)

19) but, that night, Mal confronts Kaylee over it; upset that she went over his head and practically turned Davis over to The Alliance

20) Kaylee explains why, trying to calm him down by doing so

21) and, to her horror, Mal spells out the latest news wave of what The Alliance did to Davis; The Alliance blackmailed Davis to give the formula to them if he wants to not see his entire family arrested, and Davis gave it over to them

22) Mal warns that if she goes over his head again, "I reckon to be takin' some awful serious second thoughts on you staying on this ship"; but he doesn't punish her

--> knowing too well by this point that she never meant to get Davis blackmailed into giving up the formula to The Alliance

23) some inspiration for Not So Set in DNA

[1] The Pact(2011; short film) + The Pact(2012); both written and directed by Nicholas McCarthy

24) (notable Chinese saying(s) for Not so Set in DNA)

[1] [when Davis exclaims back in shock at Mal in the Infirmary]

nǐ zhǐshì fēngle huò tī gāowán?! = are you just crazy or kicked in the testicles?!

[2] [when Davis is talking to Kaylee at night and beginning to really get upset at her]

nà zhǒng gāowán tī = kind of testicle kicking

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Not So Set in DNA]

In honor of everyone with good hearts on set of the original Firefly series? A episode with monstrous cattle seemed like a episode they would do if Firefly wasn't cancelled to begin with.

In a table discussion as a special feature on the Firefly TV Blu-ray set?

It was clear that Nathan Fillion, Alan Tudyk, and Joss Whedon really wanted to have a episode with mutant cattle or horses. I'm less sure if Ron Glass felt that strongly about the idea(but he didn't seem to object to the idea either).

And, even though Joss Whedon wanted no mutants or aliens in Firefly...

Well, I went for another term altogether to keep both things in mind at the same time.

Monstrous cattle sounded best to me then for this episode.

Also...

I really wanted to do a Kaylee focused episode.

And... With her being so caring?

Meat raffles would really leave Kaylee with mixed feelings.

Then... The inspiration quickly hit me:

What if I have this episode be both?

Originally, it was just going to be around Kaylee's feelings and others on the crew around the monstrous cattle.

But... I instead realized I could go even darker:

Is there anything that could lead Kaylee to really turn on Mal(even if she wasn't trying to)?

Well... Her trust of The Alliance being all shiny for the most part could lead Kaylee to unintentionally turn on Mal.

But... That's not all that led to unintentionally turning on Mal.

Kaylee being so quick to trust people and tell them her innermost thoughts? That doesn't always work well(especially with Davis that night).

Sure. She may have been kind of quick to trust Tracey in The Message.

But... He was a buddy of Mal's and Zoe's:

That kind of didn't count for being so quick to trust a complete stranger.

Kaylee of course will still be sweet as ever. She just isn't going to be as quick to trust people she doesn't know well with her innermost thoughts.

Also...

There's a action filled teaser that's kind of a fake out until it cuts back to Kaylee, quite some funny moments, River starting to put the pieces together for finding the new class of The Academy, some interesting backstory around Kaylee and Bester, and a big calm before the storm.

Ironically... River trying to help Kaylee feel better in a big way is what leads to the storm in the long run for Kaylee:

Not out of it.

Originally, I was thinking Simon would be the one to comfort Kaylee at the end.

But... As I wrote the ending for the episode?

I realized it was much better this way(with Mal and Kaylee kind of comforting each other).

Even with how much Kaylee got Mal upset?

He really can't stay mad at her for long:

Because he knows full well she always comes from a good place and cares so much.

Episode Front Cover Disclaimer: Any original characters of mine that appear here can be any ethnicity really; pictures of them in these episode front covers otherwise look for sure as they are pictured here

Hellbound

the episode Hellbound;

spun off from chapters six and seven of the Firefly RPG Book Ghosts in the Black, combined with Deep Underground(under the Further Adventures possibilities for the Ariel episode section)

1) in the wake of experimenting on River's brain, the Academy is about to release the Hellhound Class; three or five "perfect Alliance Operatives" to The

Alliance to quietly kill every big criminal left in the Verse that isn't willing to come quietly(Browncoat or not)

--> (related to above [1]) if they succeed, it'll also automatically condemn to death high level criminals that could be potential assets for The Alliance against big bad criminals; and all Alliance prison satellites and independent listening posts will be kind of quickly repurposed for Alliance military facilities(giving rise to a even more militaristic military run Alliance "for the good of the Alliance"[who would shoot first and ask questions later no matter what])

--> (related to above [2]) so it's up to Mal's crew alone to stop the Hellhound Class at any cost, before they can get a first mission and head out of the Academy for it

2) the underground has had a lot of trouble getting anything but faint signals around the Verse for The Academy's moving space station; because The Academy is using The Halo asteroid belt around the White Sun system as cover for their space station(a lot of minerals that would interfere with scanner readings and make them faint; even if someone can triangulate their signal from a part of the asteroid belt the space station is passing through)

3) Mal and River meet up at the Rim planet Meridian with Agent Mrs. Spiral(disguised as a Alliance senior secondary school graduate in the near future to throw people off with appearing to be a young age; even with wearing a Browncoat styled jacket) so River can tell her where The Academy's new base is; with Zoe and Jayne upstairs at the same nightclub in case there's trouble from The Alliance

--> but, with numbers spread too thin for the underground at this time, Agent Mrs. Spiral tells them the Serenity crew is on their own

4) meanwhile, none of them know they're being listened in on by a DJ named Carey Ashford(it's his only appearance though); and he soon goes upstairs to talk to a

mystery figure with a familiar voice(but only hints of her in the teaser; leaving it up in the air if it's Inara or Saffron as the most likely possibilities)

--> (related to above [1]) this was inspired by wanting to have Lisbeth Tallow in this episode(from Ghosts in the Black), who is a master of disguise; and then it occurred while writing the episode that she should be disguised as someone very familiar to the Serenity crew to personally get to one of the members of the Serenity crew(which led to disguising herself as Inara or Saffron as the best choices)

--> (related to above [2]) still wanted to have Inara and Saffron not really show up until near the end of Season 2, so was quite hesitant about it; but then, I realized really getting to Mal and making him emotionally compromised would be very interesting to explore and very dark(so I went with Lisbeth Tallow disguising herself as Inara "offering herself up to The Academy to "take River's place" to try to protect the Serenity crew as a very dark way to draw out Mal)

5) later that night, River has nightmares more intense than ever before; predicting in vivid detail what will happen if the Hellhound Class is successful for The Alliance and remembering most all of it(not just cryptic hints)

--> (related to above) River's nightmares and visions in this episode are heightened by reading the minds of the Hellhound Class; who are teenagers who have gone through the same conditioning and surgery as River(but also been unethically brainwashed by more recently developed top secret Blue Sun drugs[under the same drugs The Alliance gave to the missing POWs to brainwash them as unwilling Alliance soldiers in Ghosts in the Black])

6) that same night, Simon reveals out in the open to River he only lets River go see Agent Mrs. Spiral with Mal because Simon trusts the underground more than Mal; even now, Simon still isn't sure he can completely trust Mal(because Mal is "psychotic and yet not", and Simon still doesn't know much more to Mal as a person to better tell for himself)

7) River reconstructs a password she mostly remembers from her latest nightmares of The Academy, and fully accesses Academy Project Hellhound Release; fully finding out what the Hellhound class is and what their directive is soon

--> the password is TCPL888-DE-CK2; a Hellbound episode Easter egg for Ghosts in the Black(the first letter of each word in the first distinction for the Westlake on page 155, then the same number of dice/die type for all distinctions and signature assets of the Westlake repeated three times; the second set and third set of the password combined makes Deck 2[where the lab and office for the researchers on the Westlake are; with password protection in the office]; the same password placeholders for the password from the creepy picture on page 178)

8) Serenity is dented and scratched a lot by the asteroids in The Halo asteroid belt while flying toward The Academy base(plus nearly running out of gas)

9) not long after Serenity lands in a crater to rest for now, the Serenity crew is getting close to The Academy's mobile station base; and...they get a wave on the Cortex

--> (related to above [1]) it's Inara, teary eyed and shaky, trying to convince the Serenity crew to turn back before they're all killed by The Academy; and she's strapped in a operating chair with silvery neurological sticks suction cupped to her head(very much like River was in her nightmare in the episode The Train Job)

--> (related to above [2]; second part scrapped) ~~but~~ Mal knows something is very wrong, and not just because Inara may have been coerced by The Alliance to try to convince them to turn back; he points out that Inara wouldn't send a wave to the whole crew about this first(she would send a private wave for Mal first, whether it's a letter to him or not), even if she were coerced

--> (related to above [3]) Mal realizes Inara is already starting to talk like River talks(after being experimented on by The Academy); very much implying if there's any chance of saving Inara from becoming just as mentally traumatized for life as River was, they'll only get one shot(and it's now; not later)

--> (related to above [4]) but, The Academy was “nice enough” to give the Serenity crew and Serenity anything they need to get out of The Halo in one piece; if the Serenity crew does turn back and leave Inara in The Academy “to take River’s place”(to protect River and the crew from The Academy until they fight them another day)

--> (related to above [5]; kind of scrapped and kind of not) Mal strongly suspects Inara has been brainwashed; knowing Inara well enough to tell she’s not acting like herself(she would be closing her eyes and trying to hold back tears over her extremely mixed feelings, and there would be tears and crying out)

--> (related to above[6]) River warns Mal that it’s not really her; and Mal just assumes she just means Inara being brainwashed to be a unwilling Hellhound(which is very much implied by “taking River’s place” and “hell creating” student)

10) The Academy also showcase science and art projects “for academy graduation” from several years ago and now that are really made before the students begin to exhibit violent behavior(to make it look like they aren’t conditioning and brainwashing their students to become killers for The Alliance)

11) the Serenity crew uses The Academy’s offer to help them get out of The Halo to their advantage; planning well in advance to take out the four Alliance Intelligence agents watching them make repairs on Serenity and fill Serenity’s engine with gas(largely thanks to River seeing that vividly into the future and/or presently mind reading the Hellhound class and others in The Academy base)

--> then, when Mal, Jayne, and Zoe storm The Academy base(also largely thanks to River seeing that vividly into the future and/or presently mind reading the Hellhound class and others in The Academy base), the Hellhound class holding machine guns like they’re lightweight and a armed Inara are surprisingly waiting for them(with Inara still in the chair and seemingly helpless at first, with ~~one or two~~ many agents for The Academy guarding the station)

--> (related to above [1]; very much implied) meaning at least one student in the Hellhound class has read the plan from the Serenity crew's minds and alerted the rest of The Academy of the arrival of the Serenity crew ahead of time(at the very least not out of choice from The Academy torturing one of them to make him or her tell them)

--> (related to above [2]; scrapped, because would be too obvious it's a trap to Mal, Jayne, and Zoe)

just some Alliance Intelligence agents in the cargo bay and the Hellhound class on the second deck at first; but, after Jayne throws his magnetic latch grenade harmlessly into the air with a big flash to daze the Hellhound class, more Alliance Intelligence agents come in by surprise to try to take out Jayne and Zoe

--> (related to above [3]; scrapped) River tries to get into The Academy's files again to help the Serenity crew; but, because at least one student in the Hellhound class has read the plan from the Serenity crew's minds and alerted the rest of The Academy of the arrival of the Serenity crew ahead of time, the password has been changed(and more than one possibility of passwords in the kids's minds would at least confuse River for a while[and reading their minds wouldn't just give her the answer right away])

--> (related to above [4]) with two way mind reading, River plans to reach out to the Hellhound class to "heal with their brains"(appearing like a angel to them in bright white light and grounding them well enough in reality to at least convince them to stand down for the better); as soon as Jayne sprint jumps up and harmlessly throws up a magnetic latch grenade(taken off of Vera and carried into The Academy base with him) harmlessly high over a elevator and up the elevator shaft to give the Hellhound class a big flash to daze them with

--> (related to above [5]) but Felix Sturgess is mentally killed by the brains of Ada Pinnock and Lemuel Zhang in the bright white light; because in this episode collection, Felix Sturgess as a teenager was a runaway teenage murderer of

very likely mostly innocent Alliance teenagers before he was coerced into The Academy in exchange for not arresting him(and he was evil; part of it being he purposely let his beard and mustache grow out so he could disguise himself as a Alliance schools janitor to kill his teenage victims)

12) originally in Ghosts in the Black, Felix Sturgess resisted The Alliance with everything he had(even though he was brainwashed into being a soldier for The Alliance); he was brainwashed to guard the Westlake from intruders, make sure to start up the erasing sub-routine to erase all data on the Westlake's computers, and then commit suicide after he does(so a genius teenager version of Felix Sturgess was bound to be even more messed up than the original adult version of Felix Sturgess)

If they go looking for Felix, the Crew notices his body at the foot of a computer console in a pool of his own blood.

They confirm that Felix had activated erase protocols on the system's files. Felix had instructions implanted into his cerebral cortex, which included custom handling of the Westlake's special cargo in the event of intruders.

Even if he believed the Crew was there and official, he had already activated the erasing sub-routine and the final piece of the puzzle was to then take his own life.

A similar screen to the one they saw in the security office flashes before them, as they stand there watching the files delete one after another.

13) Mal, feeling there's no other way to stop Inara, fights her by himself(which isn't helped by a metal door electronically slamming down shut to lock them in the room); but, he's also deeply struggling with his dark side and his good side(hoping to save Inara from being brainwashed and to not to have to kill her to stop her)

--> he's about to kill her(feeling he has no choice now to save himself as well as others), when he unintentionally violently punches the makifier concealed under Inara's clothes

--> Mal is soon clutching his violently throbbing hand

14) but, as soon as Inara's voice gets electronically distorted for a bit from the punch, Mal realizes it's not even really Inara; which explains all too well why she turned out to be more of a physical match for Mal than he might have thought(he was fighting a Alliance Operative disguised as Inara)

--> the Operative(Lisbeth Tallow) is about to kill Mal in that moment, declaring it doesn't matter now if her cover as a Alliance Operative is blown; very much implying that taking Mal in dead or alive would be a good backup plan for The Academy(and if The Academy can brainwash Mal into being a unwilling Operative for The Alliance, that would almost be as good to them as the Hellhound class automatically condemning to death high level criminals that could be potential assets for The Alliance against big bad criminals)

15) Mal coldly strangles her to death; but Mal almost dies from his wounds (from some machine gun fire from the Hellhound class that managed to violently hit his side and from some violent punching from Lisbeth Tallow[disguised as a mentally breaking down Inara recently conditioned and brainwashed by The Academy])

16) fortunately, Zoe, Jayne, and the three surviving students of the Hellhound class, Zoe come in to save Mal from dying at the last minute; but it's thanks to River's genius and the genius of the three surviving members of the Hellhound class that Mal is medically saved from dying and patched up in time(implying Simon may or may not have had a hand in helping Mal recover, and it's left up to the reader to conclude for himself or herself if Simon did have a hand in helping Mal recover or not)

--> (scrapped) but, with some help from Zoe, Jayne, or River, Mal gets some more time to stand his ground

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not; turned into two deleted scenes) members of The Academy are coming back in their shuttles to the mobile station base; but the Serenity crew makes it out just before they do(and some of the members of The Academy are seen to have blue gloved hands)

--> (related to above) very much implying that The Academy is now closed down and no more in light of their wave of failures in the episode Hellbound(which is fully revealed in the episode High Blue Noon)

17) Jayne and Zoe carried Wash to the pilot seat, and they got out of The Academy mobile station base and The Halo before Alliance Intelligence could send in reinforcements

18) the Serenity crew ended up spending most of their credits just to get Serenity all fixed up; because of getting hit hard from asteroids in The Halo all over again

19) (leading up to the episode High Blue Noon)

Ada, Lemuel, and Wilamena were dropped off back to the doorsteps of their homes over two days in a hurry; but, only time will tell if being in Alliance mental facilities there is any better

20) Mal is left with extremely mixed feelings; and, emotionally compromised for who knows how long, he very much implies to Zoe she's now acting captain of Serenity and that "the day has come"(calling back to their conversation in the bar in the beginning of the episode In Wetware and War; + with more backstory revealed with Mal and Zoe)

--> implying that Mal gets a little better at not letting his dark side or good side get the better of him from now on(when he's again captain of Serenity)

--> (related to above) including into the movie Serenity, when he otherwise might have been even more on edge with even graver consequences for the crew; when the whole rest of the crew is protesting over Mal's plan to turn Serenity into a Reaver ship, and Mal hoping to get to the planet Miranda in Reaver space and find something to clear the whole crew out of them being hunted by The Alliance over the secret buried deep in River's head(and Mal threatens to shoot down anyone if they're not with him because "there are a lot of fine ways to die. And, I ain't waiting for The Alliance to choose mine.")

--> also leaving the next episode [Hands of Blue] with Zoe as acting captain of Serenity; and very possibly Mal getting back into the action against the Hands of Blue out of wanting to protect his crew above all else(even with him still being emotionally compromised[yet ironically, that might very well prove to the Serenity crew that Mal can be ready sooner than later to be captain of Serenity again]; mostly done)

21) more on Lisbeth Tallow; the Alliance Operative in disguise

--> (related to above [1]) can be very cold, but her mood is usually slightly tempered; keeps her slightly curly very dark brown hair medium length so she can easily hide it or dye it under her disguises

--> (related to above [2]) she tag teamed often with Alliance Operative Shan Holt for their high efficiency together catching and killing outlaws in the midst of Alliance crackdowns; until Shan Holt was killed by a member of the Triad(passing off as a Alliance police officer) gunning him down fast enough(in the wake of the Triad being hunted down by The Alliance after the episode In Wetware and War), and Lisbeth in turn killed him with her sword

--> (related to above [3]) Shan Holt and Lisbeth Tallow were even dating in their off hours; only their dangerous jobs got in the way of marrying in public(knowing it would make them easy targets for their enemies, and that The Alliance at the very least would not tolerate that and see it as deadly failure)

22) notable Chinese saying(s) from the episode Hellbound

[1] [when Zoe is in the galley with the rest of the crew, reflecting on the Hellhound Class]

zài zhànzhēng zhōng zuì zāogāo de fǔlàn de gǔtou hé ròutǐ = the worst kind of rottin' bone and flesh in war

--> the second reason why a certain unnamed planet and/or moon is called Bena in this episode collection is it is named after one of the first brands for diphenhydramine

called Benadryl, and diphenhydramine is an antihistamine used to treat allergies, symptoms of the common cold, and several other medical conditions(which symbolically makes some more sense in the Serenity movie with a certain character or two)

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Hellbound]

This is like the Serenity movie before the Serenity movie. Only, it's a 45 minute episode.

The stakes are as high for the crew and for the future of the Verse itself. There are nonstop twists and turns.

The crew goes up against The Academy that turned River into a living weapon and finally puts a stop to The Academy for good.

And... Everyone gets a big moment.

For Mal fighting the Alliance Operative in disguise? It simultaneously was and wasn't really a victory.

It was a big character moment for Mal struggling with his dark side...and what ultimately leads him to think for a while he's not even worthy of being captain on his own ship because of it.

He will sometime become captain again.

But... At the time of this episode... That's a ways off.

Hands of Blue

a episode called Hands of Blue; a whole episode based on the Badger and Hands of Blue parts of the comic mini-series Those Left Behind

1) with Zoe as acting captain of Serenity, and very possibly Mal getting back into the action against the Hands of Blue out of wanting to protect his crew above all else(even with him still being emotionally compromised[yet ironically, that might very well prove to the Serenity crew that Mal can be ready sooner than later to be captain of Serenity again]; mostly done)

2) [when Badger talks to Zoe, Wash, and Jayne about a salvage job over Sturges]

what the Serenity crew don't know is Badger's cane has a toned down version of a sonic device built into it

--> (first part kind of scrapped and kind of not) Badger's excuse is it's to help him recover from a rival gang fight he got into in Persephone; but, the cane when tapped hard enough on the tip would activate the sonic device(at a frequency that only River can hear)

--> the toned down version of a sonic device isn't enough to kill River; but it is enough to almost kill her(and Simon sedating her to unconsciousness is the only way to not have it kill her)

--> which is exactly what the Hands of Gray want; River to be unconscious long enough in the ambush by The Hands of Blue(to both for sure not predict the future well enough to see the ambush coming fast enough to warn the crew, and to be sure River can be captured more easily by The Hands of Blue and taken to Alliance Intelligence in the wake of The Academy being gone for good)

3) (in Act III) Badger has a secret meeting with one of the Hands of Gray

--> (related to above[1]) Badger has fully pieced together a "toned down" sonic device was snuck into the cane The Hands of Gray gave him for free(to help him walk with his limp); and in anger, Badger uses the "toned down" sonic device in the cane and a fatal blow to kill the Hand of Gray(with Badger being very angry over finding out the Hands of Gray tricked him into almost killing River)

--> (related to above[2]) and soon, Hands of Blue are hunting for Badger; leaving him on the run and ending up part of Book's underground resistance movement later on

--> (related to above[3]) originally was planning to have Badger just turn on the Serenity crew and that's all there is it(exactly like in the comic mini-series Those Left Behind); but, Badger would never intentionally want to harm River(even if it's almost killing her with a high chance of being revived by Simon), and it made more sense in the long run to have Badger not know at first there's a "toned down" sonic device built into the cane The Hands of Gray gave him(also otherwise, Badger would crack under guilt over almost killing River and spill about setting up the Serenity crew with the salvage job on Sturges before they could fall into the trap[and it'd be a really short episode])

4) notable Chinese saying(s) in Hands of Blue

[1] [when Wash shouts to Jayne for however briefly opening the trapdoor in the cargo bay while Serenity is on the very edge of atmo over Persephone]

Xiàtiān yúchǔn de bìlú! = dumb as a burning out fireplace in summer!

Havens of Two Roads

the episode Havens of Two Roads;

the Serenity crew mostly discover the truth behind the Blue Sun corporation firsthand in the episode Havens of Two Roads, when they and Book's crew work together to try to bring back a DNA vial for making a Hand of Blue from a member of Book's spy network who is a double agent in Blue Sun(meanwhile, Simon is still troubled over killing anyone for the first time[even if it was the Hands of Blue themselves]; from the episode Hands of Blue)

1) [to reveal in Havens of Two Roads; done]

around the time of 2 weeks later part of the 2-parter Better Days, Book was also very cautious about being rich(similar to Mal); so, he was laying groundwork for a spy

network to take down morally questionable Alliance spy operations in equal force(with help from Book's and Inara's connections around that time(very likely new + old))

2) [to reveal in Havens of Two Roads; at least implied]

after the episode Those Left Behind, Book and Inara gathered up the central part of their spy network(including Book's crew) onto Book's Firefly Series 4 ship; (done)and Saffron helped back building Book's new ship with her own money(not long after the 2-parter Better Days)

3) Book remembers what he wanted to reveal to Mal's crew, and he finally tells them; about his spy network(but only gets to tell them the basics before Kaylee asks where "her boyfriend" is(aka the six year old boy from Serenity))

4) (for going into the Blue Sun facility)

Mal suggests going in with Jayne, Zoe, and Book ahead of Book's ship in two teams to sabotage Blue Sun security cameras(with help from Book's knowledge of Alliance Intelligence and some help from River if necessary), take down most any Blue Sun security guards that come to try to stop them, and meanwhile let Book slip away to lead a third team to go up ahead, find the double agent, get the DNA vial on the Hands of Blue, and get out with everyone else they can as quick as possible; but Zoe plans to have Book lead a second team to go in with all the guns they can as cover and a distraction(with Jayne and Book in that team) while Zoe herself and Mal go on ahead of them to find the double agent, get the DNA vial on the Hands of Blue, and get out with everyone else they can as quick as possible(and if Zoe can get Inara to pull a few strings to copy the authorization code for a high ranking Blue Sun representative for Blue Sun, that's a plus[but that doesn't happen])

5) but then Zoe's plan quickly gets turned upside down when two Hands of Blue show up instead...with the double agent's dead corpse on the floor, and one of the Hands of Blue outright revealing there never was a DNA vial on them(ending Act II)

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not) but then Zoe's plan quickly gets turned upside down when the double agent is held at gunpoint for Mal and Zoe to see soon as Mal and Zoe come in(ending Act II)

--> and after most of Book's team, Mal, and Zoe nearly don't make it back, Zoe begins to realize that Mal is the captain the crew needs more for them to survive and keep flying(no matter if Zoe and Wash are still not sure if they can forgive Mal over his darkest secret)

6) Blue Sun = A big branch of The Alliance's Intelligence branch(instead of just being a corporation)

--> Blue Sun are the arms dealers and the biggest financial backers for Alliance Intelligence; Blue Sun's CEO is always slightly independent and greedy to best fit this role in Alliance Intelligence(but Blue Sun and the rest of Alliance Intelligence share intel with each other)

--> the Hands of Gray are the advisors for Blue Sun and the real inner circle of Alliance Intelligence(a centralized group of bosses), and the Hands of Blue are the main muscle for the Hands of Gray(but, if necessary, Hands of Gray can be the muscle themselves)

--> (the just created part kind of scrapped and kind of not)

Blue Sun the corporation just created to discourage the idea of The Alliance having a Intelligence branch called the same thing; it turns out Blue Sun is really a shell mega-sized corporation posing as a slightly independent Alliance friendly corporation to help the Alliance Intelligence branch gather intel; that also happens to have most any of the companies and corporations in The Alliance under their mega-sized corporation

7) the DNA vial the Serenity crew and Book's crew are trying to bring back turns out to be all a big red herring, and yet another elaborate trap to take down River and Mal for good by the CEO of Blue Sun himself(in cooperation with Alliance Intelligence)

8) in spite of this, the Serenity crew and/or Book's crew do discover the real secret behind the power of the Hands of Blue(thanks to getting away with some important Alliance Intelligence files); The Hands of Blue are actually given prototype adrenaline injected directly and surgically into their brains; killing most of the brain cells in their left hemispheres and doubling the brain cells left in their brains(making them super logical, calculating, and super strong with a evenly distributed extra layer of muscle throughout the nervous system[almost like human androids without the machinery])

--> (related to above) but all the Hands of Blue volunteered; which means no one can go to The Alliance and accuse anyone over it in a Alliance trial

--> (scrapped; seems a little too convoluted) the Serenity crew and Book's crew try to take the Hands of Blue's gloves from Blue Sun inventory to produce DNA test results, figure out how The Alliance made the Hands of Blue, and how to take down the Hands of Blue for good

9) Zoe fully realizes that she is still kind of in the war because she goes into every job like it's a war(do or die, love or hate, The Alliance or just a crooked criminal looking to do business, and very little really in between); and that black and white mindset could get the whole crew killed or worse

--> while Mal plans and feels in between love or hate, and can be really unpredictable to people who don't know him well; both of which how Mal and his crew have kept flying no matter what for the most part throughout most of the Firefly show

--> (at least implied well enough) Zoe also kind of hates herself for not fully realizing all of this about herself sooner, because this recent mission to find the double agent might very well have gone better if Mal was leading instead of herself

--> and deep down, Zoe knows what it feels like to still be in the war(like Mal was when he killed his own sister before he could find out what side for sure she was really on); and so, Zoe can't bring herself to hate Mal for his darkest secret(she's not sure about Mal, but she for sure doesn't really hate him[all of which she admits to him at the end of the episode])

10) (made a cameo on Haven in The Shepherd's Tale; the community leader for the mining colony Book has found home in)

a sixty two year old woman with slightly short red hair parted down the middle, and wears a open light dusty colored robe over patchwork light gray

--> Jenny Colliceli

11) (the boy on Haven from the Serenity movie; that really likes Kaylee)

he wears a small almost stone like and slightly darkish red hard hat, some black rimmed mining goggles strapped around the helmet itself and just sitting there, very light brown shoes, light yellow tan pants, and a dashiki shirt that has canyon like brown and gray slightly sloping down lines in the back and is mostly dust colored in the front

--> Corrin

12) More on Book's and Inara's spy network

[1] (the pilot from Book's ship that's also a Browncoat)

has a browncoat, a solid dark blue shirt, and a pair of solid brown pistols; has medium black hair --> Nossel Hinson

[2] (a female Companion Police officer)

light gray dress with thin green leaves, reddish brown boots, and a near blackish green P.C.A.D.; has shoulder length brownish blond hair; older sister of Hollins Correia --> Suzanne Correia

[3] (a female Companion Police officer)

a open silvery lined and white purplish army jacket, a black top with purple streaks of swirling wind and fire across it, and a silvery green Chinese dragon necklace; has long black hair; at least very much implied that her family were murdered by a gang or something --> Ami Renteri

[4] (a male Companion Police officer)

has black pants full of holes left over from bullets never patched up, a purplish gray Companion Police uniform, muscular, and brown leather shoes; has medium black hair --> Marlon Collins

[5] (the double agent in Blue Sun for Book's side; killed before Mal and Zoe could find him)

--> Addisu Winterhoff

[6] (Browncoat)

clean shaven with rigidly stiff head and medium brown hair; has a shotgun, muscular --> Allen Wright

[7] (mercenary; killed in action by Blue Sun security guards)

youthful looking guy with somewhat messy medium black hair; has two pistols, black gloves, and a near black red leather jacket with sleeves full of bullets to roll into his open pistols in the middle of a gunfight;

younger brother of Suzanne Correia --> Hollins Correia

13) Blue Sun ~~Satellite~~ Skyplex(Headquarters)black diamond floor; silvery metal lined brown crates; sliver tinted white halls with Blue Sun blue suns across them, dark blue ceiling lining, glacial blue grids of little lights, and glacial blue lines between the little lights; one blue sun icon in every hall is really a fiberglass wall section that's always on for Blue Sun security to use((but only responds to Alliance security commander voice command or DNA scan) has a handprint scanner built in the Cortex screen itself to detect heart rate of the Alliance security commander; turns yellow if high risk but not life threatening, turns green if Alliance operative shows up, and turns red if life threatening and automatically alerts Alliance Intelligence with the latest security camera footage(turns red if Alliance security commander is very nervous and hiding something if so indicated by heart rate and voice, even if it's for a minor mistake))

14) (scrapped; doesn't make sense with Hands of Blue)

Book pretends to be arresting Mal and Zoe under orders from Parliament to try to get the Hands of Blue to stand down long enough for Mal, Zoe, and everyone else to get away by; Book mouths "play along" to Mal, and Mal gives Zoe a little signal about it

--> (related to above[1]; makes even less sense with the episode in retrospect)Book takes Mal and Zoe and the double agent through a security room and into a closet; the closet isn't covered by security cameras, so they could talk freely then about what the double agent has found out and get out of there fairly quickly(possibly slipping right past the Hands of Blue)

--> (related to above[2]; makes even less sense with the episode in retrospect)the Companion Police might very well join in too, pretending to arrest the rest of Book's team to buy them time as well

15) (scrapped; too soon two episodes after the episode Not So Set in DNA)

was going to have a ANS news story on monstrous cattle playing in the background in the security room part instead of a ANS news story on a Genradiation plant scare on Lazarus

16) a ominous cameo by the Operative from the Serenity movie here(but only implied to not spoil the Serenity movie; unless you have already seen or read the Serenity movie, you're not likely to know who it is anyway)

Very late that night, in a dark bedroom...

The body of the Blue Sun CEO is lying dead in his fancible silver lined bed.

He had frontless medium black hair.

A Alliance Operative in all black stealth clothes pulls out a sword from the body.

A brief shot of plenty of dark red liquid is dripping from his sword.

And, in a all too cooled sounding voice... The Alliance Operative finishes saying, "...making a better world."

--> originally, the Operative had a ominous cameo in the end of the comic mini-series Those Left Behind; this is the closest thing to that scene I could think of that wouldn't fly in the face of the episodes of Can't Take the Sky from Us

17) (scrapped; wasn't necessary to add, but would have fitted it in the episode if could)

have Jayne "happen to drop" his Blue Sun shirt into the fire in the wake of revelations about Blue Sun(in the end of the episode)

18) notable Chinese sayings for Havens of Two Roads

[what the security guard says to the other in the security room]

Nǐ gōngjī hé gōngniú xīpán! --> you cock and bull sucker!

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Havens of Two Roads]

With how calculating Simon can be? Him quick to worry he could become like Mal isn't far off at all.

Also...

The weird thing about this is...that Kaylee and Jayne are at this time the only ones in the Serenity crew that don't know Mal's dark secret.

That wasn't intentional. But, even I found that weird as I was writing it.

Episode Front Cover Disclaimer: Any original characters of mine that appear here can be any ethnicity really; pictures of them in these episode front covers otherwise look for sure as they are pictured here

A Mixed Blessing On Us All

a episode called A Mixed Blessing on Us All;

based on a unproduced episode idea where there's a standoff, a pregnant woman on the other side of the room has a gun pointed at Mal, Jayne, and Zoe, and Mal is shot at and barely turns fast enough to shoot back at her to save his own life ~~they have to shoot her to save their own lives~~

1) Daphne was behind the bar counter the whole time Raymond's own gang turns on him(with Daphne's help and another member of the gang having a Blue Sun sonic rifle); completely hiding, at the time, the part that Daphne has a big pregnant belly

2) (related to above) and Mal, completely unaware of this, shoots Daphne in the side at a diagonal angle for the back of the bar; and the shot unintentionally hits Daphne's abdominal wall(leading up to her death)

3) the Serenity crew keep Daphne alive long enough to deliver the baby; they can't save Daphne, but Simon saves the baby

4) (kind of scrapped and kind of not) and after "the crew is left to play Three Men and a Baby", the crew sell the baby to a good home since there's nothing else they can think of to do and they can't return him/her to the mother

--> (related to above) scrap the "sell the baby to a good home" part; replace this part with "bring the baby back to his hometown"

5) meanwhile, River has her birthday the same night Daphne is kept alive long enough to deliver the baby

6) the next day, Kaylee and Zoe go in the shuttle to get some short term supplies to help care for the baby; and sell off Daphne's shotgun and shotgun ammo in another town(having it cleaned well enough beforehand and passing it off as a randomly found shotgun) to pay for the short term baby supplies and also some canteens of water(to help the crew not get thirsty)

7) Jayne and Mal go into town to find and talk to Carol Langan; leaving Wash and Simon having to care for the baby and River

--> (related to above[1]) from the accelerated fluids and traces of adrenaline in the baby(a big part of which are left from Simon's experimental medical procedure to deliver the baby in time), River greatly misreads the baby for a kid in The Academy that was just saved by the Serenity crew; and River acts like a baby herself to try to get the baby whatever he wants

--> (related to above[2]) thinking it's a matter of life and death until Simon finally gets through to River; kind of turning the part of the crew is left to play "Three Men and a Baby" to "Two Men and Two Hyper Charged Babies"

8) original terms from A Mixed Blessing On Us All

[1] Ativanil = a more advanced version of the pharmaceutical drug Lorazepam/Ativan; can treat seizure disorders, and relieve physical and neural/mental anxiety before surgery and medical procedures(not just physical; could also apply to brain surgery for treating almost any bad symptom of a mental condition, but treating one bad symptom alone is more expensive than physical surgery), and treat anxiety disorders

9) from the Q&A Session with Joss Whedon at Fox Studios in Sydney(Australia) in 2005(also known as Serenity Q&A Session in Australia)

--> at that time, this is what Joss said he believes most; but, in light of a certain revelation in 2021, this may no longer be what Joss believes most after all

"[...] the only thing that matters is what we do: The only reality is how we treat each other. Morality comes from the absence of any grander scheme, not from the presence of any grander scheme."

But, at the same time, he's so quick to contradict it in his writings because it's really interesting to him to explore the confluence or conflict of those ideas(and likes doing that).

--> (to add later on for the episode After Miranda?) Joss said if he was going to pick someone to play Jayne's father, it would have to be Tommy Lee Jones; "because he's the only one that I can think of who can put the beat down on Adam Baldwin"

10) the Serenity crew leave the baby on the doorstep of the bar where the shootout took place, where the sane bartender finds the baby and gives it up to adoption to a good home the next day(thanks to help from the planet wide community[Core Planet or Outer Rim, doesn't matter which one])

11) notable Chinese sayings for A Mixed Blessing On Us All[when Carol starts to find out from Mal that Daphne is dead]

Tā mā de liǎng gè yuèliàng zài qiú! = fuck both moons in the balls!

12) Inspiration for A Mixed Blessing On Us All

[1] Law and Order: SVU episode Smoked

[2] Law and Order: SVU episode Monogamy

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for A Mixed Blessing On Us all]

After Havens of Two Roads... I wanted to go further back to the core of Firefly:

By doing more of a western story.

This episode is mostly based on a unproduced episode idea of a pregnant woman being shot by Mal.

But... I hid the pregnancy to everyone else until she was shot(even to the audience):

Because I thought it was the only sensible way to not have Mal be painted as a bad guy here.

I made this episode to turn out to be mostly around family, second families, and togetherness.

Even Jayne got a mixed blessing of his own when he met Daphne's sister Carol...who turned out to be his kind of woman to get sexed with(and she likes him back in that way).

For writing the Heart of Gold Revisited episode? I ended up cutting out from the original cut of the episode Heart of Gold a horse riding scene(the one where Mal rides off on a horse to go after Rance).

So... I thought a horse riding scene with Mal similar to that one was a nice touch.

Also...

I thought it'd be priceless in a kind of morbid way to have Mal and his crew going from Daphne to one family member to another, looking for someone to take care of the baby...only for it to turn out the barkeep in town is the only one left that would be in good enough graces with the family and could take care of the baby.

I purposely left the identity of the Alliance Operative near the end up in the air.

Is it the same one from the Serenity movie? Is it not?

We may never know, and it only adds to the scary in that scene.

All-Tempted and Junk

a episode called All-Tempted and Junk;

where Nandi asks to come onboard Serenity this time to stop a bad man Nandi knows from the past(with at the very least Mal's help)

1) but, it's hard for Mal and Nandi to not be too tempted with each other, while Inara still needs time to think about her own feelings with Mal and with Nandi; because it turns out Inara also found out Nandi's dark secret the same day she left Serenity, and Inara has been treating Nandi the exact same way as she's treating Mal ever since

--> and Inara sure would take it too personally if Mal "takes to bed" with Nandi without Inara already back on speaking terms with Mal and Nandi; so that Mal can ask Inara's permission first about having sex with just Nandi or something(without Inara telling them she's gone for good)

2) Petaline is left to take care of the Heart of Gold for the first time in Nandi's absence; but, Nandi has trained her well up to this point

3) Lionel Dudayev = disgraced rich heir to big company Kingoil under Blue Sun; rapist; incinerated his victims in his fireplace in his soundproof suite, and loved to hear them scream while they're dying; son of founder of Kingoil Dylan Dudayev

--> has been buying up shares in Kingoil posing as a stockholder that "happened to look a lot like Lionel Dudayev"

--> but, since no one for years has come forward with proof Lionel Dudayev isn't dead, The Alliance has kept looking the other way since(unless he's proven guilty from a Alliance investigation brought upon him; whether through investigating another crime that happens to lead to that proof, or through a irrefutable confession)

4) Kingoil specializes in engine oil + cooking oil for the Core Planets; founded by Dylan Dudayev

5) Dylan Dudayev's wife is Juliet Dudayev

6) a corrupt Companion named Bellamy is paid by Lionel Dudayev to keep him clean of criminal records; wears a black leather open jacket, and a green dress with orange flowers; slightly long and curly blond hair

--> (related to above) Bellamy was paid in advance by Lionel Duydayev to fake his death in the first place; when Lionel Dudayev himself was found out as a rapist, he was soon to be put on Alliance trial before very likely being killed by Alliance authorities for being found guilty(he escaped death from The Alliance by faking his own death)

7) the final fight or chase takes place in a junkyard

8) and we at least show off the Flying Mule's ejection seat, with Mal using it to help him chase after someone or to eject the bad guy out of the pilot seat; the Flying Mule's ejection seat from The Sting: The Better Days Cut's epilogue

9) original terms from the episode All-Tempted and Junk

[1] The Bellycatch = standard protection for pregnant women's bellies after the first trimester; a easily adjustable, round, and bulletproof metal harness in combination with custom made Alliance maternity clothes

--> It may be kind of expensive. It doesn't help much with a pregnant woman's body temperature. But, it sure gets the job done.

[2] Trimenopa = a medicine to counteract first trimester side effects of pregnancy(but only effective for a woman's first pregnancy)

--> (related to above) central part of Alliance history on pregnant women inside and outside of the workplace

[1] They(aka The Alliance) wanted no vacations aside from the Dōngjì Holidays: Even for pregnant women running their military and city ships.

Billions of complaints from pregnant women came in that two weeks is not enough for maternity leave.

To avoid a Unification War of the sexes that would be too grave to turn back from... The Alliance quickly gave all pregnant women extra time off like they asked in the year 2512.

But, this was just for that year. The Alliance spent the whole year devising a two part Alliance solution.

The Alliance developed a medicine to counteract first trimester side effects of pregnancy with little to no complications. It's called Trimenopa.

Take Trimenopa every early morning, and not a stranger would know a woman was pregnant.

Unfortunately... It loses its effectiveness past the first trimester of a first pregnancy: Because a pregnant woman's accelerated bodily functions gone unhindered by a thing long enough develops antibodies to wipe out the Trimenopa inside her altogether.

Beyond that first trimester of taking Trimenopa... A pregnant woman's body is left either quite uncomfortably cold or hot in addition to a lot of mild side effects from pregnancy.

Not much folks on the Core Planets go for a second pregnancy. The high risk of getting fired for a pregnant woman unable to work for long would be too great.

Some rich families give a few million credits directly to The Alliance government just to have The Alliance reluctantly let them get maternity leave off the books. Most families on Border Planets

and Rim Planets just get people to fake critical injury reports and say “but we got all the medical supplies we need to treat them” to The Alliance.

[2] Even so... The Alliance invented a clever way to protect pregnant women’s bellies past a first trimester: The Bellycatch.

10) notable Chinese sayings from All-Tempted and Junk

[1] (when Lionel Dudayev and Bellamy are about to try to forcibly take over Mal’s Flying Mule and then Serenity for their getaway off the moon)

Shījù zhōng suǒyǒu fēngkuáng de shìwù… Wǒmen ràng nín zhèxiē húndàn jiāng nín de qiāngzhī tuī xiàng wǒmen de lǘzi! = of all the crazy in the Verse... We get you bastards shoving your guns right in our asses!

[2] (when Nandi is about to kill Lionel Dudayev)

xiàshuǐdào de húndàn! = sewer rat son of a bitch!

11) inspiration for All-Tempted and Junk

[1] Law and Order: SVU episode Control

[2] Law and Order: SVU episode Head

[3] the updating B’Elanna’s holographic template part of Star Trek: VOY episode Renaissance Man

[4] the junkyard fight from the fifth alternate ending on script for Alien: Resurrection(aka the fully scripted alternate ending set in Paris for Alien: Resurrection that Joss Whedon wrote; been hoping to work quite a bit of that junkyard fight into a finale for a episode of Can’t Take the Sky From Us for a few months since first reading about this alternate ending of Alien: Resurrection)

(< Nandi's Character Bio >)

business oriented, yet with a strong impulsive side; fiercely independent, yet very motherly of anyone she's friends with(or with a lover); can be quite strict of a motherly figure if something don't sit right by her(would never whip anyone; but, she'd fire a warning shot from her gun(s) if she felt she had no other choice to keep order going); would never forgive a man for raping a woman or strikingly similar; yet, very forgiving within reason for most anything else(if someone was sorely misguided or really not thinking well in a act of war, she could even forgive murder)

--> quit being a Companion because after five lessons of playing the dulcimer(and she smashed it into kindling), she realized it would be too constricting of a life for her; so she became a unlicensed whore and made a life for herself by turning the Heart of Gold into a sexually freeing and profitable life for her and for boy and girl whores there

--> never took up playing a musical instrument again after the dulcimer; but likes listening to other people play music(even if it's a dulcimer)

--> very similar to Mal; even their darkest secrets and deepest regrets are very similar

--> Nandi was Inara's only friend and best friend she had left on Sihnon(in the wake of Inara's darkest secret)

--> unless it's Inara, Nandi doesn't do friends with benefits; Nandi has a lover(s) and clients of her own, and not usually anything in between; Inara and Nandi are that close, even after Nandi left Companion training(after they got back in touch in the Heart of Gold Revisited)

--> Nandi isn't very athletic; more likely to watch free-for-all ball than play herself(especially if Mal or Inara is playing)

--> is a very good listener for any friend of hers; except when it comes to a sin that's unforgiveable to her

--> can downplay her feelings just as much as be completely blunt about them; largely depends on her mood and who's around

--> deep down a old fashioned romantic, yet doesn't really think of herself as romantic(even sounds quite confused whenever someone tells her she is); likes long walks on the desert sand, Chinese strategy games and card games, wine, flowers, etc.

--> for that matter, she doesn't like to think of herself in constricting terms(even more so than Inara); she'd rather feel in the now than fit in anyone's box, and tends to deeply respect others for feeling very similar on this; at the same time, with anyone she's close to, she doesn't have much hesitance with opening up a great deal on her past, present, and future thoughts(but she won't want to talk about her past for long, even then)

--> loves better men than most, and women who are quite like a man and yet not(though only sometimes does Nandi find a woman that fits her own definition of that)

--> also likes beads, most anything from Chinese rice(including but not limited to her own self made rice wine), cats and dogs(but thinks taking care of a pet herself would be too constricting), cigars(but mostly just as a stress reliever), and a ton of nonfiction on most anything(even stories of rapists getting caught by Alliance police)

[flying over to BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for All-Temped and Junk]

By this point... I had most of the line up for the rest of the episodes of Season 2 figured out.

But... There were two episode slots I was really struggling to fill.

One episode idea was saved for Firefly Online instead. Not much else for episode ideas was coming to my mind.

Well... That was until I realized two episodes calling back to previous episodes in Can't Take the Sky From Us would be the best call.

This episode is one of those two episodes.

All-Tempted and Junk was originally just mostly around Nandi and Mal struggling not to go too far in their relationship without Inara there:

Because of both of them not wanting to lose her as a result, so they can still have a triad(as in polyamory; nothing to do with the criminal gang(s) called The Triad) when Inara hopefully and eventually comes back to them.

That original idea was inspired by that part in the original cut for the episode Heart of Gold where Mal takes Nandi to bed and regrets it later(after soon concluding he's failed Nandi in more ways than once because of realizing that his heart was really with Inara all along).

The episode All-Tempted and Junk was the next best thing to bringing that part back for fans(because, in the Heart of Gold Revisited, that part didn't come up for obvious reasons).

Just before I started writing for the episode All-Tempted and Junk?

I've fully written out who Nandi's character is: With building on what's already there and more.

I already liked her as a character. And, I really like her now as a fully written character.

I also wanted to have at least some court drama for a episode.

And... I felt River's visions in Act I did that well enough for me.

But... There's much more I had in mind for this episode.

There were several bits and a scene from the original cut of the episode Heart of Gold I wanted to put into a episode.

Mal's scene of run jumping out the back of the Heart of Gold and shooting one of Rance's men on his horse? Most of that scene was cut and pasted into a big part of Mal in action in Act II for All-Tempted and Junk.

And... While only that scene + 1-2 bits ended up in the final cut of All-Tempted and Junk?

The other bits I wanted from the script for the original cut of the episode Heart of Gold ended up saved as deleted scenes.

To be honest... This was the easier part of writing the episode All-Tempted and Junk.

There were two big things I was struggling with while writing this episode.

The first is presenting Zoe in her second trimester of pregnancy.

Zoe is revealed to have had her first day of pregnancy around the time of The Sting: The Better Days Cut.

But... How the hell was I going to explain why Zoe didn't show much any side effects of pregnancy for episodes between the 2-parter Better Days and this episode(All-Tempted and Junk) without making myself look like a idiot?

I really wanted to not just sweep Zoe's pregnancy under the rug. I did my research on trimesters of pregnancy.

And... In light of all these things?

Having the Serenity movie still happen in a matter of a few months or half a year was the difficult question for me for Zoe pregnancy.

Then... I blew myself away with the solution in a stroke of brilliance.

What if The Alliance figured out how to get pregnant women to still work and still be all right without having to get sick days?

Well... Up to the first trimester of the first pregnancy, that is.

The human body gone unhindered and in perfect health long enough can physically adapt to anything:

Even putting out antibodies to counteract a Alliance drug that negates side effects of pregnancy.

After using that Alliance drug in the first trimester of pregnancy? There's mild but evident side effects afterwards.

I also came up with the Bellycatch to wear under Zoe's maternity clothes.

And... Since Zoe is not one for just lying down for anything if she can help it?

Yeah. She would choose for herself to wear the Bellycatch and her maternity clothes to still keep fighting alongside Mal(even over Simon's and Wash's concerns).

And... Zoe and Wash's conversation about it was more funny than I expected.

It was also a good way to call back to and show Zoe's story arc in The Sting: The Better Days Cut without having to actually read that story first.

In light of low views for The Sting: The Better Days Cut? I thought it was a good call.

Also...

I had Zoe's maternity clothes match her typical clothes for a reason.

From a slight distance... Zoe's belly wouldn't look much bigger than before:

Even with the Bellycatch and maternity clothes on.

Even if Zoe was still pregnant at the time of the Serenity movie? Zoe's belly wouldn't look much bigger than before.

Any closer camera shots of Zoe would theoretically be fairly easy for editing in the belly width of her pregnancy belly.

And... Zoe would still have her and Wash's baby after the Serenity movie(like the Firefly Dark Horse comics established with the Firefly comic Float Out).

The second thing I was struggling with in writing the episode All-Tempted and Junk...goes back to Simon.

In the last episode relative to this episode? Even Simon has realized that maybe he should just ask Kaylee out already.

I wanted to keep to having as little changes as possible with the Serenity movie.

But... If Simon asks Kaylee out before the Serenity movie happens...

How was I going to still have them not be a couple until the end of the Serenity movie...and still have them both at least be friends with each other after a falling out?

Then... I got a wickedly funny and awful idea for a big surprise twist in Act III.

What if River tried to help Nandi with her impulses in bed in secret to try to protect everyone else's feelings on the crew...only for them to be caught just in time to stop them from kissing by at least Simon and Mal?

I toyed with the idea of Simon and Kaylee finally starting a relationship already...only for the very mental image of River and Nandi almost kissing on the bed to crash down on Simon's sense of calm and make him worry too much over River again.

On the other hand... I didn't want to completely tear Simon and Kaylee apart.

So... I added a scene with Nandi assuring Kaylee that you should "least ain't should shoot it down now" and to give "a man like Simon" a few more months to know for sure(if he's really the one for her(Kaylee) or not).

I purposely bridged some gaps between now, the episode Double Jayne Trouble, and the upcoming Serenity: The All-Fired Cut(extended and slightly alternate scenes collection). That came together really good.

It took a lot of moving things over to deleted scenes and of editing.

But... I bridged all those aforementioned gaps and then some while keeping the episode well written and together.

Figuring out Chinese chess well enough to write about it was tricky.

But... Here's the kind of funny part there:

It was more fun writing a scene before Mal and Nandi even starts the Chinese chess game.

That quickly became a deleted scene:

Even before trying to bridge more gaps between this episode, the episode Double Jayne Trouble, and the Serenity: All-Fired Cut.

I didn't actually write much around a Chinese chess game. But, I guess that paid off well enough for the episode anyhow.

I also thought the junkyard fight from the original script for Alien: Resurrection was so good that I really wanted to find a way to add it into a episode.

And... I kind of got to do just that in the final cut of this episode.

All opinions of Joss Whedon aside? That guy could write action scenes brilliance usually(and he wrote the original script for Alien: Resurrection).

The All-Fired on Adrenaline and Junk Cut under deleted scenes for the episode is much more what I originally had in mind for the junkyard fight finale in the episode, and it is much closer to that junkyard fight from Alien: Resurrection than in the final cut of the episode.

But... I soon realized that it's a finale for a 2-parter or a movie: Not a 45 minute episode.

I really liked it. But, I had to cut it and move it over to deleted scenes instead.

To fit Kaylee's wonderful big twist here in a 45 minute episode?

I instead cut very quickly to Kaylee using the crane to catch Lionel Dudayev by the belt, had Nandi and Kaylee have a nice comforting talk...

And... Then as soon as Kaylee goes ahead back to Serenity?

Nandi kills Lionel Dudayev.

I was initially planning a scene with the Alliance police and/or cowboys discovering Lionel Dudayev's dead body. But, I realized I didn't really need that scene to exist after all.

I initially was planning on Inara kind of testing Nandi by not letting the underground help out Nandi and Mal in the episode.

But... I realized that probably would be in bad taste.

I really liked writing the end scene of the episode:

With Inara assuring Nandi that they can be close friends again.

It wasn't just to bridge a gap between this episode and the Serenity: All-Fired Cut. I also didn't want to end the episode on a dark note.

Hell, I really liked just about any scene with Nandi.

On another note...

The episode after this episode is Genradiation Countdown Run:

A episode calling back to both the episode Blue Suns and Townsfolk and the episode Havens of Two Roads.

I get more into it next.

Genradiation Countdown Run

a episode called Genradiation Countdown Run; where it's up to Mal's crew and Book's spy network to stop a terrorist group's plans in time before a entire planet can be killed by a Genradiation explosion(kind of a sequel to the Genradiation plants episode Blue Suns and Townsfolks)

1) Mal's crew and Book's spy network have been working together for a whole week straight, taking down Alliance Intelligence agents and assets for the greater good; members of Mal's crew also have often kept in contact with certain members of Book's spy network for more than a month now(mostly like pen pals[because keeping missions secret from Alliance Intelligence's eyes is of course important to Book's spy network]; not just talking about missions)

2) (presently) Mal's crew and Book's spy network originally sneak onboard a Tohoku Class city ship to take down a Alliance Intelligence agent, when the Alliance Intelligence agent offers a temporary truce in exchange for stopping the Genradiation terrorists in time(which turns out to be the big reason why this Alliance Intelligence agent came onboard this Tohoku Class city ship in the first place; it wasn't just to get a lift to another Alliance Intelligence mission or the like)

--> soon, the whole city ship's main systems go down and emergency backup systems go online; the chaos was made on purpose by the terrorists to buy themselves time to plant a timed bomb while the Alliance officers are running around trying to keep the peace for the panicked and scared citizens onboard the city ship

3) the terrorists are disguised as Alliance radio operators on the bridge; easily getting access to the main systems

4) the bigger twist is that the terrorists aren't even setting the bomb on a Genradiation plant part to go off when the Genradiation plant is finished being constructed(like most people might be quick to assume); they're setting the bomb up in the core of the city ship itself(the engineering facility; aka the whole eightieth floor of the city ship); hoping to have the city ship explode as soon as it reaches atmo, unleashing the Genradiation directly through atmo and instantly killing everyone on the planet before they can even see it coming

5) while Mal, most of his crew, Book's crew, and the Alliance Operative are searching for the terrorist, Jayne sneaks off a bit to a 3D printer terminal and uses the 3D printer to make himself a new shirt to replace his Blue Sun shirt he "dropped in the campfire" on Haven(the second part a scrapped idea from the episode Havens of Two Roads moved to here; with a flashback to the end of the episode Havens of Two Roads)

--> (related to above[1]) so Jayne could still be all "screw Alliance Intelligence + Blue Sun" on the mission for this episode and beyond

--> (related to above[2]) for Jayne's new 3D printed shirt(that he designed himself on the fly); Blue Sun logo in flames and melting down, and the words "ruttin' burned" in red font right below it

6) Santo has recently been retaken by The Alliance after they killed off all the slavers there(and restored government order as a result, with somewhat delayed preorders for Genradiation plants), Bena, Burnet, and New Lafayette already have Genradiation plants from preorders, Regina has placed orders for Genradiation plants after success in Lazarus(hoping to purify the atmo from the disease Bowden's Malady for good), and all other Border planet governments have by majority vote refused Genradiation plants(still sore at The Alliance over the Unification War and content to just continue on with their lives without Genradiation, including Persephone)

7) notable people on the Alliance city ship in this episode --> Alliance Lieutenant Lawler(as a inside joke), Tara(Companion onboard the city ship), Reade, Amy Royce, Alliance Commander Guillory(a woman Alliance Commander for a change, and she doesn't get killed off either; her long hair tied in a bun under her hat for Alliance military dress code regulations), Hines Marin(Alliance city ship citizen), librarian Jennifer Kent

--> librarian Jennifer Kent(curly medium dark blond and mostly tied back hair; has stark black reading glasses), Alliance Lieutenant Lawler(black medium hair; round mustache and beard, no stubble), Alliance Commander Guillory(harvest gold long hair)

--> Commander Guillory, ~~Agent Abner~~, Mal, and Zoe come across the library dome and the librarian from earlier(Jennifer Kent); who gets a "sudden visitor" to her library dome leaving a genradiation plant part on her desk(with a timer wired around it)

8) one of the Serenity crew members takes care of the bomb, while Agent Abner ~~the others~~ apprehends Alliance citizen Hines Marin(who explains why)

9) Alliance citizen Hines Marin is misled to think he's working for a Alliance Intelligence agent to spring a trap for the terrorist when it's really the terrorist using the

Alliance citizen to distract Mal's and Book's crews and The Alliance(and buy more time for the terrorists themselves to get away)

--> and possibly lead to delivering a message "from Alliance Intelligence" for Book and Agent Abner to reveal Mal's and Book's crews were preparing to kill Agent Abner(leading into Book and Agent Abner's big fight in Act III)

10) (prior to Act III) Mal is quick to blame Commander Guillory for this set up, and Zoe is quick to blame Agent Abner; but, Book and his team reach them over earwigs before things get out of hand

11) (scrapped; too convoluted, because it wouldn't work with the rest of Act III in this episode and the countdown timers for the bomb set up are too basic to be reprogrammed much anyway)

River and Kaylee manage to add twenty more minutes or so to the countdown timers by rewiring them directly into the console accesses(rerouting them to the city ship's main bridge computer); River also fakes report of the fire suppression system for the bridge is out(leading the bridge crew of the city ship and most everyone else on the bridge to automatically assume the terrorists were planning to burn up the city ship's bridge as their backup plan) so that River and Kaylee can sneak on over to pilot the city ship on a course for one of New Canaan's moons instead(with River knowing even she can't stop the Genradation plant part bombs from going off)

--> (related to above[1]; scrapped) Simon would go off about "why does she always have to run off and pull something this reckless?", Mal would end up just saying, "because she's your sister," River and Kaylee make a run for it when the whole city ship starts to explode, most everyone else tries their best to evacuate everyone onto Book's ship, escape pods, and the Alliance ASREVs in time, River quickly grabs some space suits for her and Kaylee to put on from a storage room or something, they dive into a escape pod hatch with River assuring Kaylee it's the way out, they float in the midst of

the debris, a hour or so of air passes, and they're soon enough picked up by Serenity with outer doors of the airlocks open for them

--> (related to above[2]; first part scrapped, but second part mostly not scrapped) tens of thousands start to die from the city ship explosion releasing Genradiation into the atmo of one of New Canaan's moons, but evacuations are already beginning within the hour; Parliament kind of quickly decides to shut down Genradiation plants indefinitely until a better way of containment for Genradiation can be found(and the whole Verse bittersweetly rejoices)

--> (related to above[3]; scrapped) meanwhile, Mal's crew and most of Book's crew escape from oversight of The Alliance by sneaking onto Serenity and Wash flying away behind Commander Guillory's back(with a flying out scene to be like the final scene from the Star Trek: Picard season 1 finale); but, Book and Ami are still onboard Book's ship to help oversee the evacuations, be sure the rescued Alliance citizens are kept safe, to still keep Book's ship(even knowing a big part of Book's and Inara's spy network is going to be exposed soon), and to keep Commander Guillory from suspecting the escape attempt until it's too late for her to stop them

12) (scrapped; too convoluted, because Mal wouldn't make it back to Book in time then[at the very least])

Mal goes down to the city ship's engineering facility to help take down the terrorists; but, when he pulls one of the terrorists aside and interrogates him/her about who for sure gave Hines Marin the order to plant a decoy bomb, the terrorist kind of all too happily reveals that the terrorists were the ones who did(and that they already sent security footage directly to The Alliance to expose Book's spy network[which would mean Abner is going to try to kill Book soon])

13) original terms from Genradiation Countdown Run

[1] Dome core = a Alliance city square of dome homes

--> soon after the identity of the terrorist is discovered, Lisa realizes that's how the terrorist knew of Book's and Mal's team showing up to begin with; she hacks into the Tohoku class city ship to check, and it's confirmed the terrorist has already hacked into the Tohoku class city ship's security cameras to ensure he doesn't show up in the system

14) notable Chinese saying(s) for Genradiation Countdown Run

[1] [when Ami Renteri is whispering to the others on Mal's and Book's team and Agent Abner is heading to the docks]

wèishéme tāmen zǒng shì cóng chuán kāishǐ? Wǒ xiǎng yào yīgè bù diǎnxíng de fēngkuáng jīngjì rén. Zhèyàng huì gèng róngyì = why do they always start with the ships? I'd like a untypical crazy agent. It'd be easier that way

[2] [when Lisa and Kaylee are mostly casually talking in the cockpit of Book's ship]

xiàng zhāngyú de gāowán yīyàng suíyì = casual as fucking octopus testicles

[3] [when Allen Wright is trying to comfort Suzanne Correia in the galley on Book's ship]

wǒmen huì kāi qiāng, wǒmen huì xiān shèjí tāmen de lèsè = we'll get shots coming, and we'll be shooting their junk off first

[4] [what Zoe says when she, Mal, and Commander Guillory find the bomb in the library dome]

gorram tāmen gāisǐ! = god damn hell's play to them!

15) inspiration for some of Genradiation Countdown Run

[1] Criminal Minds episodes Lo Fi + Mayhem(2-parter from end of season 3 to beginning of season 4; 2008 for both)

[2] Law and Order: SVU episode Informed

16) the Alliance Cruisers were meant to be floating cities with military, police, and civilians on patrol for The Alliance[Tohoku Class]; didn't really get to go into that in the mainstream series, but ~~might~~ get to in Can't Take the Sky From Us

--> in Loni Peristere's own words

"the whole concept of a city in space was interesting to me. I love the notion of revealing a ship in an entirely new way, and one which embraced the fact that in space there is no up, down, right, or left. There are no hard fast rules of what you are looking at. I love how we introduce I.A.V. Dortmunder seeing two towers, thinking they are just great shapes, but then we reveal they are essentially Empire State buildings - these massive things!

I love the idea that the tiny fighter craft show just how big this thing is. There's no need for scale in space - you can build ships as big as you like - so the idea of having this giant thing moving through the black was really cool.

I was actually disappointed we didn't use the ship more, because we spent a lot of time working out the design of all of it, like the interesting bays on the underside where the fighter craft were stationed."

--> in Carey Meyer's own words

"the other concept we were playing with was that the textures and colors were completely divergent. The Alliance ship was stark grey with blacks and whites, while Serenity was very warm and had texture and felt real."

17) more for Personal Cortex Access Devices

--> (only implied?) only the middle class and the rich and powerful can afford them, and even then they get more limited Cortex access(unless they're The Alliance government[who can block just about anything on any non-government Personal Cortex Access Device if The Alliance collectively feels it's for the good of The Alliance to kill a Personal Cortex Access Device user or bring him/her in for questioning])

--> Alliance government issue, connects to the Cortex(aka the Verse's version of the internet)

18) for more on Serenity's systems

--> Gravity Drive = a rotating "gravity ring" in the back(also has cooling panels around it, inside and outside)

--> Pages 175 and 190 of the Firefly Encyclopedia have more specifics for Serenity's systems; but the technobabble section on page 190 are specific terms that can be applied to just about any ship(possibly even for a Tohoku class city ship)

19) thought of having Kaylee's reprogrammer from the episode Trash appear in the episode Genradiation Countdown Run; but, it wouldn't have worked anyway in light of how Kaylee's reprogrammer works(from the episode Trash)

-- >Kaylee's reprogrammer doesn't work so well on Alliance computers without replacing at least some hardware in it first(even if it's a trash collecting Alliance drone); but, on most computers on a Border planet or Rim planet, hardware in it doesn't need replacing first to reprogram it(the biggest exception being the very few Alliance offices on a given Border or Rim planet with up to date Alliance tech)

20) more for Alliance Short Range Enforcement Vessels(ASREV);

the gunships briefly seen from the I.A.V. Dortmunder and the small gunship fighter jets from the episodes Trash and The Message are all ASREV, but of two different classes(one new, one old)

--> The gunships briefly seen from the I.A.V. Dortmunder were the retired ASREV class of old; their design was mostly recycled shortly after to become the official Crete class ships[from the movie Serenity], while the gunships themselves were mostly recycled to become the Arrowhead-Class Couriers in Crete class ships

--> in turn, this makes room for the more efficient ASREV class(by the time of the episode Trash); for the Tohoku-Class Alliance Cruisers's next generation gunships and

for smaller scale threats to The Alliance(like a Alliance officer in a ASREV going after Tracey Smith in the episode The Message)

--> not long after the aftermath of the episode Genradiation Countdown Run, The Alliance decided to speed up production, design, and deployment for the Crete class ships(which wasn't hard, considering construction time for them didn't take very long); they've just begun operations by the time of the episode High Blue Noon(with Tohoku Class city ships kind of slowly but surely being set for Verse wide decommission and recycling of ship parts[for as soon as Crete class ships can be across the whole Verse, which is from several months to a year]

--> after Tohoku Class city ships are decommissioned, most of the city ship ASREVs and most of the recycled Tohoku Class city ship parts would go to help build the massive fleets of ships within the Crete class ships themselves(making building those fleets within the Crete class ships almost as quick as building the Crete class ships)

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Genradiation Countdown Run]

I absolutely like how the episode turned out. But, writing for a ton of random characters was like hell for this episode.

I really wanted to show what living on a Alliance city ship would be like. And, I got to finally do that in this episode.

I really liked doing it...except for how long it took to actually write those random characters on the city ship(that we cut over to in Act II for the episode).

I didn’t want stock characters with not much complexity to them. So, I believe it was worth it.

But... At the same time... I’m still kicking myself over how long it took.

My medical struggles with sleep at the time of writing this episode weren’t helping either.

I've gotten medically better though. So, that’s good.

I originally wrote five scenes with random characters on the city ship. They were originally intended to stretch out across the whole episode.

But... I had to cut three of these scenes to put the final cut of the episode together (as in brought to the size of a 45 minute episode).

I kept those three scenes as deleted scenes instead.

I nearly lost two of them. But, I restored them from backup files.

And... Because of better pacing for the episode... I didn’t stretch out the other four aforementioned scenes one by one.

I was initially going to have it be two by two. If there was room, of course.

There were two good scenes with Kaylee and Wash early on in the episode talking about Serenity. But, that too got cut in the final cut of the episode.

I kept them as deleted scenes instead.

I originally wanted a kind of big confrontation with Badger showing up again.

But... Most of that original plot got greatly cut down:

Even for what ended up kept in deleted scenes.

I honestly don't like Badger much. But, I felt it would be a disservice to the fans to not go back to Badger in a big way one way or another.

The end scene of the final cut of the episode delivered well enough there.

Yet... At the same time... From the deleted scenes for this episode?

I really liked the kind of big confrontation with Badger and his girlfriend. River's appearance in those deleted scenes alone was priceless.

I really liked adding more big engineering stuff for Kaylee to do. For Can't Take the Sky From Us, it's been a long while since we had that.

Stopping a bomb with help from River only made it better in a way.

But... One big problem with originally writing the episode was a much more convoluted Act III(which seemed too much like Final Fantasy science fantasy than Firefly).

I instead had Act III better grounded in reality, and the whole episode seems better for it.

My other big problem with writing this episode was finding a character transformation to have for one of Mal's crew and/or Book.

For this episode... There at first didn't seem to be much reason for anyone on Mal's crew and/or Book to have a character transformation.

The closest thing I originally thought of was having a dramatic fight with Kaylee's jealousy over Ami Renteri hanging out with Simon more.

But... That would be too convoluted for this episode anyway for all kinds of reasons.

So... I thankfully didn't do that.

Then... I finally thought of a character transformation:

Book assumes that if even he can still strive to be a good person... Can't anyone else strive to be good with enough time and the right guidance?

How does this tie into the character transformation I thought of here for Book? Well, read on and you'll see.

We already know that deep down Book still strives to be a good person, even with his very dark history of being a double agent for the Browncoats(who, to keep his job as a double agent for the Browncoats, murdered many innocents along the way[and that Book was a double agent long

enough to orchestrate the biggest Alliance military disaster in history and become key to steering the Unification War into a stalemate instead of a outright win for The Alliance])

And... With strong reason to back it up... Book is often a very forgiving kind of person.

But... What if even the stance of Book's forgiveness was tested to the breaking point?

What if Book has to face a member of Alliance Intelligence from his past that's fairly likely guilty of murder of innocent people(without having been a double agent himself like Book was)...that Book himself secretly really isn't sure he should let be killed after all because of how much they both begrudged how Alliance Intelligence operations ran at times?

When just about everyone begrudgingly works together with the Alliance Intelligence agent and other top level Alliance officers to stop the ecoterrorists...

It quickly becomes not a outright easy thing to think about for Book.

It's pretty much a stepped up version of Book's personal struggle within in the Firefly 2-parter episode Serenity:

Because a Alliance Intelligence agent isn't trying to shoot them first...unlike all the other Alliance Intelligence agents Mal's crew and Book's crew shot down over the course of a week(and, of course, unlike Agent Dobson).

Book's private conversation with the Alliance Intelligence agent in a meeting room was purposely made as less clear as possible to keep that question going in Book's head:

Even though most any unbiased third person seeing this scene would be quick to assume the Alliance Intelligence agent did murder Alliance Lieutenant Lawler for no good reason.

When the ecoterrorists send security footage of Book’s and Mal’s team to Alliance Intelligence...

Alliance Intelligence spills the beans on Book's current spy network operations.

Then... All hell breaks loose with Book and his former friend in Alliance Intelligence.

In the fight...

Book nearly kills the Alliance Intelligence agent out of fear of Mal, Mal’s crew, and Book's own crew from being next in line to be shot down by Alliance authorities.

Then... Mal doubles back and saves Book from himself:

Because Mal knows all too well how easy it can be to go down a murderous dark path and lose one’s own humanity along the way.

Not long after this...

Book thanks Mal with his full name this time instead of referring to him as captain:

Signifying how thankful Book himself is for Mal helping him keep to “his path of God”(even though Mal doesn’t believe in God).

Book has finally realized the hard way he really can't save everyone from evil:

Even if it's someone he was close to at a key point in time. No matter how hard he may try to.

On the bright side though?

It's also good to know there are still plenty of good people out there.

I also really wanted to show more of what Book's crew members are like: On off hours and on the job.

In retrospect(Serenity movie + bonus episode After Miranda spoilers alert here)...

This is the last time we see Book's crew in a episode...before we find out they all get killed in the wake of the attack on Haven in the Serenity movie.

So... For the episode Genradiation Countdown Run?

I wanted to have as many extra moments as possible with Book's crew and Mal's crew hanging out together and just talking. And, I wanted to make them all count.

I'm amazed I could keep all of them in the final cut of the episode.

Plus...

If fans love a character(s) enough? They'll make their own stories where he, she, or they are alive again.

There's at least several fanfiction stories out there with Book and Wash still alive. I know what I'm talking about.

And... One way or another?

Yeah: It's been a good ride on Book's Firefly Class 4 ship.

High Blue Noon

A episode with the aftermath for the Hellhound Class(from the episode Hellbound) combined with the lost episode idea for Blue Moon Rising; but titled High Blue Noon ~~Sun~~ instead of High Noon

[~~for the crazy scientist from River's past episode~~]

1) (kind of scrapped and kind of not) The Hands of Gray escorted by the Hands of Blue(both from Blue Sun) threaten to wipe out a whole town with their two Wraith class ships just to kill one of the former members of the Hellhound class(Ada, ~~Lemuel, or Wilamena~~) if the Serenity crew don't stop him or her for them; and without pay(this is "to get them off easy for now given the circumstances"[Serenity's crew] with The Alliance, which greatly annoys and worries Mal and worries the whole rest of the crew)

2) a piece of the ship is broken, and so Mal and his crew go to a junkyard to get back on their feet with a better part(where a freeway by the Alliance is being made not far off from the junkyard on a planet right between the Outer Rim and Core Planets[but it's where the Hands of Gray track them down to make the ultimatum])

3) meanwhile, Mal and River ~~his crew~~ are coming up with a way for Mal and his crew as a whole to try to take down the two Hands of Gray and the two Hands of Blue around when they're about to find the aforementioned member of the Hellhound Class(and for a way to save Ada, Lemuel, or Wilamena as well); but, they have some help from one or both of the other two former members of the Hellhound class(who both have made new and better lives for themselves after being rescued by the Serenity crew and put into Alliance mental facilities)

--> (related to above; at least implied) thanks to River mind reading and vividly seeing into the future around former members of the Hellhound class and the Hands of Gray, she not only can see one likely future in the episode High Blue Noon; she can vividly see the two most likely futures(heightened in this way by implanted limbic systems in the Hands of Gray's brains)

4) the extra kicker though is mental help didn't help the aforementioned former member of the Hellhound class; who has broken out, gone crazy with a mission of his or her own making, and is on the verge of becoming a planet wide terrorist

--> (related to above) so someone on the Serenity crew or one of the other two former members of the Hellhound class may have no choice but to kill the gone crazier former member of the Hellhound class to save the whole planet

5) (scrapped; seems a little too convoluted for this episode) in any case, the Hands of Gray has a devious backup plan just to keep the Serenity crew occupied long enough for The Hands of Gray and/or The Hands of Blue themselves to get away; they start a countdown for wiping out the town of Serenity View with a pair

of bombs on the cliff's edge(which are both connected to one timer) while the Serenity crew has to stop the countdown in time(much to everyone's frustrations)

6) (scrapped) in any case, the Hands of Gray starts a countdown for wiping out the whole planet(with a large laser drill hidden in a towering monument) just to keep the Serenity crew occupied long enough for The Hands of Gray and/or The Hands of Blue themselves to get away while the Serenity crew stop the countdown in time; much to everyone's frustrations(except for Inara and Kaylee who are mostly just thankful no one was killed[but this episode takes place after Inara left in the episode Those Left Behind and before Inara's return to Serenity in the Serenity movie])

7) (scrapped; seemed too convoluted in light of the Hands of Gray operating as both heads of Alliance Intelligence and reserve operatives of Alliance Intelligence)

the second Hand of Gray makes a run for it, River tries to stop him, the second Hand of Gray uses his sonic device to leave River in excruciating pain so he can get away to his Wraith class ship anyway, River soon explains to the crew that the Hands of Gray have had the same procedure done to them as the Hands of Blue in addition to implanting limbic systems inside them, and the crew splits up in teams of two to try to stop the Hand of Gray and to find Ada in time to try to save her from herself

8) (~~scrapped?/for another episode?~~ not scrapped) The Alliance is building a freeway on a planet, but the planet's residents don't want to leave

9) originally was just going to scrap the freeway idea; because for a long time, couldn't come up with a good idea to include a Blue Sun development project with a freeway(until writing for the episode High Blue Noon, where finally did find a good idea to include a Blue Sun development project with a freeway)

--> (related to above) the episode Blue Suns and Townsfolk was quite similar but different for the freeway idea; at the time when couldn't come up with a good idea to include a Blue Sun development project with a freeway, a Verse wide Blue Sun power plant development seemed the next best thing for the freeway idea

10) (Zhao's disguise in this)a woman with short black hair; wears a quilt like sleeved dress with faint yellow, faint green, faint pink, and faint purple squares(some Chinese words and swirled lines of blue and purple)

11) the mechanic Sidney McHale and the Independents double agent Qiao Zhao are both characters from the Firefly RPG adventure Friends in Low Places(under Firefly RPG adventures collection book Echoes of War: Thrillin' Heroics)

12) Ada has high IQ + had a good life growing up prior to The Academy; but her home was on a farm on a border planet, and not in a rich family on a Core Planet

13) (kind of scrapped and kind of not; River reads Ada's mind and figures it out herself)

in the finale, Ada reveals her darkest secret to River

--> (related to above) nothing could break Ada...until The Academy paid off a then recently arrested sex offender to violate her; leaving her with borderline personality disorder + suicidal tendencies

14) it's why Alliance mental hospitals didn't help Ada, and why Ada kept her darkest secret to herself; even from River, who is more disturbed by sexual violation than violence

--> it also shows personality disorder is often or typically caused by sexual violation; not usually as ambiguous as Saffron is with her very possible multiple personalities

15) Ada has recently gone further off the deep end in the Alliance mental hospital; seeing captains, commanders, and lieutenants(Alliance or not) as Hands of Gray

16) Ada, when she was in The Academy, developed a mechanical life scale model of a explosive depth charge for her "art project for Academy graduation"(magnetic depth charges that also burned for more devastating impact for military issue ASREVs[by jettisoning some of their electrical components while in use])

--> but, after The Academy was shut down, the Hands of Gray quietly buried and locked away any evidence left of The Academy that could be used against them by Parliament and more Parliament friendly Alliance Operatives(because the Hands of Gray, as the core circle of Alliance Intelligence, kept tabs on every Alliance Operative; even their affiliations); so, work on some working explosive depth charges was halted and quietly buried before they could even start the testing stage

17) Ada though, using her inside knowledge of The Academy(and the Hands of Gray), found and stole back almost all the explosive depth charges from a warehouse of theirs on Persephone(with several dead bodies of the Hands of Gray on the scene from Ada throwing the first explosive depth charge right on them)

18) Ada knew though that that wouldn't be enough to devastate a whole planet; so, Ada didn't just steal explosive depth charges

--> Ada stole Wilamena's "science project from the Academy" from the warehouse(the CortexVR helmet and system) for its full body monitoring wetwire

19) Ada used the CortexVR helmet and system to get full body readings on one of the Hands of Gray to mimic his vocal chords, put on the CortexVR helmet and system to look and sound exactly like that Hand of Grey to get access to his Wraith class ship, used the Wraith class ship to wave buzz and reprogram the security camera footage at the warehouse to edit out her appearance, and left in her commandeered Wraith class ship

20) Ada knocks out some Alliance military officers on Hera in a Alliance friendly sheriff's office, locks the door, and uses the CortexVR helmet and system to get full body readings on them to mimic their vocal chords and sense of touch to override voice responsive and touch responsive security safeguards for the central Alliance computer network overseeing the AATSs

21) Ada issues a surprise Alliance Intelligence maintenance check on the AATSs across all the sheriff offices involving sending all the AATSs to Ada's position; with Ada putting on the CortexVR helmet and system to make Cortex screens in the other sheriff

offices to look and sound exactly like one of the knocked out military officers(and the only reason Ada has been keeping them alive for now is to read their minds to complete the deception; after that, Ada kills the knocked out military officers)

22) Ada's ultimate plan is using all the AATSs to deploy the explosive depth charges with crash landings...right into all the major fault lines of Hera(including Serenity Valley); if all the fault lines are ruptured, it'll unleash a ring of fire upon Hera with huge volcanoes(and kill all life on Hera)

23) and only River and ~~(and possibly~~ Lemuel~~)~~ can stop Ada

24) prior to breaking into the sheriff's office, Ada kidnapped Wilamena, used the CortexVR helmet and system to get full body readings on her to mimic her vocal chords, and put on the CortexVR helmet and system to look and sound exactly like Wilamena to later edit into the security camera footage; making it first seem like she was the one who broke into the warehouse when River checks the security footage herself(thanks to Mal's and/or Zoe's prompting to the Hands of Gray)

--> and Ada is able to all too easily tell someone else is wave buzzing the security footage when she is constantly monitoring the security footage through her Wraith class ship; knowing only the Serenity crew would be brought into this by the Hands of Gray from mind reading at the time of the episode Hellbound and from logic(she didn't have to monitor the Hands of Gray to figure that one out)

25) thought of introducing non-binary people in this episode of Can't Take the Sky From Us; having it a option for Firefly Online seemed in the long run like a good call, because a single player campaign would be going back through the episodes of Can't Take the Sky From Us anyway(people that want more non-binary people can be happy with this and other people can be happy with this as well)

26) the prototype for a voice activated Alliance sonic rifle was Lemuel's "science project for The Academy"

27) the CortexVR helmet and system has been used to revolutionize Alliance military and Alliance Operatives operations with deep diving military operations for at least a month now(not for public use there); restoring government order to Valentine by Alliance military and Alliance Operatives coming out of the water at night to kill crime syndicate members and going back into the water with the dead bodies(to make it seem like crime syndicate members were wiping each other out and/or committing suicide)

28) but, a newly formed Alliance Radiation Sweeping Division plans to incorporate the CortexVR helmet into their EV suits; and that's publically been announced throughout the Verse

29) and maybe it's for the best not to know what Felix Sturgess's art or science "project for the Academy" was

30) many folks on the Core Worlds have been writing into Parliament and the Blue Sun Corporation, asking if Alliance backed headsets based off of the tech in the CortexVR helmet could be built for private entertainment in homes

--> (related to above) Parliament and the Blue Sun Corporation are beginning to debate among themselves if they think the Verse is ready for that or not; but, who knows if it'll stay stuck in Parliament or not?(leading to a big part of Firefly Online, Season 2; but that part has been kept secret until Firefly Online could be shown off as a special feature(s) for Can't Take the Sky From Us)

31) thought of having Simon and Kaylee finally become a couple in the aftermath part of this episode of Can't Take the Sky From Us; but, that would fly in the face of the mood of the aftermath part of this episode(and also wanted to keep to the Serenity movie as much as possible anyway; including the aftermath part in the Serenity movie with Simon and Kaylee finally becoming a couple)

32) original terms from the episode High Blue Noon

[1] R-Compression Alternator = balances both electrical and radion distribution simultaneously in a Firefly Class ship's engine(or a engine from a similar originally independently made class ship) at the same time to prevent internal wire combustion(huge imbalances of either of the two can fry the whole engine from the inside out); the R-Compression Alternator looks like a corkscrew of a squeezed out reddish pink big ball with little lightning rod like metallic rods and several rings worth of white bushings circled around it; looks like a aft alternator, but different(a aft alternator is in back, looks like half of a reddish pink big ball with several rings worth of white bushing circled around it, and isn't squeezed out and turned into a corkscrew[a aft alternator is a term from Pages 175 and 190 of the Firefly Encyclopedia])

[2] (related to above)Radions = just a simplified way of saying artificially made gravimetric based neutrons in the Verse(imbalances with radions, Grav-dampeners, and/or electricity can be deadly; but, with a good balance of electricity and radions in a ship's engines, they boost overall electrical efficiency to be on par with Alliance city ship electrical efficiency[for Cortex connections and everything else onboard]); radion is a term from Pages 175 and 190 of the Firefly Encyclopedia, but the Firefly Encyclopedia didn't have a definition before for it

33) notable Chinese sayings in High Blue Noon

[1] [when Kaylee is referring to the Hands of Blue while privately and casually talking to Mal in her bunk]

dànǎo dǎpòle zázhǒng de xíng = brain broke lines of walking bastards

34) (kind of scrapped and kind of not) the secret Operatives branch of the Alliance ~~has become~~ is kind of very corrupt; because the Hands of Blue have taken

it over “for the good of the Alliance” under the Hands of Gray(but the Alliance’s politicians and other branches aren’t mostly evil)

--> (related to above) from Joss Whedon’s own words:

"The Alliance isn't some evil empire", he explains, “but rather a largely benevolent bureaucratic force. The Alliance's main problem is that it seeks to govern everyone, regardless of whether they desire to belong to the central government or not.”

35) Hands of Gray = the heads of Alliance Intelligence overseeing the Hands of Blue, with the Hands of Blue the first experiments of Blue Sun(before experimenting on River)

--> (very much implied) after success with the Hands of Blue(and when they started experimenting on River), the Hands of Gray have experimented on themselves with the same procedure

--> (related to above; second part very much implied) but, the Hands of Gray didn’t just surgically extract whole limbic systems from the brains of students in The Academy to make them “can’t not feel”; the Hands of Grey surgically extracted whole limbic systems from the brains of students in The Academy to implant these limbic systems into their own brains(with what brain cells are left on the left hemispheres of their brains) for a higher level of emotional restraint with any little thing done wrong and a frighteningly clearer head for a bigger Alliance friendly picture; the Hands of Gray’s biggest weakness is that they have moderate emotions, for both good and bad(unlike the Hands of Blue, who are only with slight emotions)

--> (at least implied) they also operate as reserve operatives of Alliance Intelligence that would rather “fall on their sword” to protect Alliance Intelligence secrets from getting out than run from a fight that could kill them

--> the Hands of Gray are between the Hands of Blue’s cruelty and the Alliance’s interests; hence shades of grey within the Alliance

36) (possibly?; done) the Hands of Gray are the same people that arranged to ~~gave the order to~~ let the surviving Browncoats go(shortly after a order from The Alliance went out to bring them to prison camps), figuring it'd be better to see what they do next after their disillusionment with the war and then kill them if necessary(which most of The Alliance kind of uneasily agreed to)

37) in the mainstream Firefly series, the ships and more "seedy" parts of towns were designed mostly around creatures in the wild, inspiration from Star Wars, or both

--> Back through atmo... Several teams of two AATSs are flying around Hera.

Why this many for the planet Hera?

Well... When news of the tragic crash on New Canaan reached Hera?

Many Parliament members and sheriffs from Hera have had enough with delayed help from The Alliance.

They drafted up a huge compromise proposal.

Plenty of solemn smiles were in Parliament that day. The Hera AATS Initiative passed almost unanimously.

The Alliance would give Hera a Alliance Military officer to help maintain peace on every settlement. They'd bring over AATSs for several of the new military officers to manually control from Alliance friendly sheriff stations. And, Alliance military would see hundreds of credits going to them instead of to pay for post-civil war reconstruction of settlements.

That made quite some sheriffs, many folk, and most Browncoats on Hera more bitter and angry.

Parliament members and many sheriffs living on Hera moved to towns bordering Serenity Valley to protect themselves from assassination attempts: Because most folks wouldn't dare start gunfights close to the Serenity Graveyard.

Then again?

Serenity is never easy to hold on to and keep...along the edge of Serenity Valley.

38) (possibly?; scrapped) ironically, Serenity's crew bringing attention to the Hands of Blue's unnecessary cruelty might give the Hands of Gray reason to kill the Hands of Blue themselves to spare River this time around because the Alliance doesn't like "to add more sins to the Verse"

39) the Hands of Blue are very nit-picky; even the littlest thing done wrong is reason for them to fire their rod instruments that make someone bleed from the eyes

--> (at least implied a little) but, in turn, even the littlest thing done wrong by the Hands of Blue is reason for the Hands of Gray to fire their rod instruments that make someone crumple in excruciating pain(very similar in look to the Hands of Blue's rod instruments)

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for High Blue Noon]

Holy crap. This is such a bittersweet episode.

Please don't get me wrong. I think and hope all of the episodes in Can't Take the Sky From Us are good.

But... The episode High Blue Noon in the long run was extremely satisfying for me to write for many reasons.

1) Simon and River both have very bittersweet transformations in this episode.

Simon gets back at the Hands of Blue in a big way...by saving everyone without himself having to kill someone else after all.

River realizes the hard way she really can't save everyone from evil:

No matter how hard she may try to(pretty similar to Book's transformation in the episode Genradiation Countdown Run, for both good and bad).

Kalliav especially doesn't count there:

Because after River and everyone else on the Serenity crew found out Kalliav is evil? River didn't try to save her from evil.

And... The episode High Blue Noon is before the bonus episode After Miranda.

So... River hasn't yet fully accepted that Saffron really has reformed for the better or could reform for the better.

After all... If River did think Saffron was worth saving all the sooner?

River would all the sooner try to make up with or reach out to Saffron.

2) Kaylee is the one who saves Simon in more ways than one.

She saves Simon from his greatest fear(becoming as cold as Mal) by stopping him from killing the Hand of Blue.

She also saves Simon from being killed along with the same Hand of Blue(when the Hand of Blue commits suicide by setting off his plastique armor).

Simon's transformation of fighting that greatest fear of his goes full circle here. And, it's with Kaylee's help that he fully faces that fear and doesn't let it kill him inside.

3) Finding a strong way to show personality disorders are a real mental issue and should be taken seriously, how devastating they can really be, and that Saffron's mostly light attitude about her own very possible multiple personalities is really not representative of everyone with borderline personality disorder or multiple personalities.

Out of all three of the remaining former members of the Hellhound class?

This fit all too well with Ada Pinnock:

Because the episode Hellbound already showed she has had suicidal tendencies before, and that same episode very much implied she's more of a militaristic shoot first and ask later person than Wilamena and Lemuel.

4) This episode circles back around to plenty more, and yet it all works well for the episode.

[1] Hera in a more modern sense to make up for a lack thereof in the show(we only saw battles in the Unification War)

[2] bridging any possible gaps in between the Battle of Serenity Valley and what happened exactly following The Alliance's victory against the Browncoats

[3] well meant closure to the Hellhound class in a episode of Can't Take the Sky From Us as a whole

[4] reminding people that the Serenity crew still picks up passengers for jobs(even now)

[5] reminding people that Reavers are still a unpredictable looming threat in the Verse

[6] finding out the tragic truth of what happened next with the monstrous cattle (explaining all too well why not much waves on the Cortex have brought it to light before)

[7] finding out what happened with the CortexVR helmet and system going forward in the Verse(for better or worse)

[8] Zoe getting to finally use her tranquilizer needle again in a big way

[9] showing full color security camera footage does indeed exist in the Verse(like with security footage of the bar seen in the Serenity movie)

[10] a certain lost episode idea I originally thought I couldn't pull off(but, when I was writing this episode, I realized I could after all)

[11] the brief appearance of the newly comissioned Crete Class ships(also a strong hint at the Serenity movie, since a Crete Class ship is in the Serenity movie)

[12] bridging the gap of what happened to Agent Dobson's shuttle in a very cunning way(and also quite funny in retrospect)

[13] and showing a full scope of Kaylee's pictures of the whole crew in a powerfully comforting scene between Mal and Kaylee

--> but the scene itself wasn't originally planned

5) With River vividly seeing into the future and all for this episode?

I wanted to do a episode where Mal's and River's plans to overthrow the two Hands of Gray and the two Hands of Blue are mostly along the lines of a Leverage episode.

But... I knew the episode High Blue Noon could be too dark if I wasn't careful enough for writing it(it could be argued the episode Hellbound was bordering on too dark).

Then... A brilliant idea struck me to at least slightly ease the overall tension:

Why not flash back to months ago with Mal and River beginning to already plan for the Hands of Gray coming one day...even though River back then isn't entirely sure what the Hands of Gray are yet?

The other side of the brilliance to all of this is that only with Mal and River planning together can they save everyone else on the crew from the Hands of Gray and the Hands of Blue.

No one else on the Serenity crew would secretly have River as part of the crew for months while publically acting to everyone else like he or she is the one with most of the planning(and throwing in planning of his or her own to the mix).

It's not only what helps save everyone on the crew in a big way:

It's why Mal purposely covers for River when she goes with Lemuel and Qiao Zhou to go after Ada(which is very much implied in the end of the episode).

Why is that?

Well...

Qiao Zhou is known in the underground, and by extension most anyone that's allied with Book's and Inara's spy network, for really not wanting to draw attention to herself by AATSs(because it's evidence she can't just destroy to protect her secret identity as a double agent for the Independents and Browncoats).

Mal is a big ally of Book's and Inara's spy network. That's already been established.

Why would Mal want to reveal to his whole crew that Qiao Zhou is dropping off River and Lemuel so they can try to stop Ada on their own while Qiao Zhou stays incognito?

Why would Mal want to bring it up to anyone else besides River herself...when all the good it might very well do is start a whole big argument over River still being seen as "still a teenager" to Simon and to others on the crew?

A big argument like that could tear the crew apart with no coming back from it.

Mal doesn't want to just protect his crew from danger:

He wants to keep his crew together like family...even if Mal himself doesn't really want to admit that part out loud much.

I also really wanted to keep giving Mal more captain stuff to do:

Not just big damn hero actions Zoe or Jayne could just as easily pull off.

I thought this episode was a good way to remind people how more cunning Mal really can be than almost anyone else on his crew(without or with River being a big part of his cunning plans; with or without vivid visions of the future from River herself).

On a darker note...

The backstory behind what happened following The Alliance's victory against the Browncoats isn't only backstory. It was meant to be a secretly damning condemnation of political inaction around COVID-19 stimulus bills in America.

I think most people with common sense and decency, regardless of any political views, can very much appreciate that condemnation.

Yes: The Alliance itself as a government in the show Firefly is never just black and white.

But... If for at least a moment you were to substitute Alliance officials for certain American politicians infamous for supporting Trump and leading inaction on many political bills over the years of the Trump administration?

You may or may not already know where I'm coming from here.

If you don't already know? Please let me explain more of what I mean.

When a part of the government or a whole government uses inaction to massacre unarmed people... Whether it's through letting people starve to death on a abandoned battlefield or not...

Isn't it just as immoral as sending military officers into towns to massacre unarmed people?

Isn't passing a bill that can save tens of thousands more or millions more through action and not inaction always the morally better call?

Shouldn't we do our damn hardest to pass such a bill sooner than later no matter what it takes: No matter what legal red tape we have to tear up and patch back up to do so?

Yeah. I thought so.

Also...

Mal himself may not know how much Zoe really knows about River being secretly part of Mal's crew.

But... It's implied Zoe either kind of knows or secretly fully figured it out for herself that River is secretly part of the crew(especially in light of the episodes Objects in Space and Deck the Halls of Dongjì).

That part is kind of funny really.

On two lighter notes?

1) River playing Tall Card with Platinum and with others on the Serenity crew is a small step of Simon letting her grow up more and have more fun.

It's purposely up in the air if this was started after River's comment of not getting to have fun in the episode Genradiation Countdown Run, or if this was started earlier.

But, it is definitely after River's 17th birthday.

It's not like her becoming a legal adult in the Verse is far off anyway.

Although... At the same time?

The part that River mind reading people drinking makes her feel like she's drunk already(and yet she's calmer then because she knows the delusions she has then are for sure not real)? That had to have played a hand in easing Simon off a little more on watching over River.

2) I was inspired by page wide photos of the main cast of Firefly(in both official Firefly companion books by Titan Books) to showcase in words a collection of pictures of the Serenity crew that kind of easily lets their personalities shine through.

And...

It's really Kaylee's collection of photos that she's taken over time of the Serenity crew: Past and present.

I really liked finally getting the chance to fully show them all.

It also kind of more than makes up for lacking some more happier moments with two certain episodes: From the episode Hellbound to the episode Hands of Blue.

A Dying Wish

a episode titled A Dying Wish;

around the lost episode idea where the crew lands on a dying planet, the remaining townsfolk try to steal Serenity to escape the dying planet, oxygen and fuel and food is limited, and Mal makes the very difficult decision to leave the townsfolk behind to save his crew

(set three episodes before the Season 2 finale)

1) the original plan for this episode was to start off with River and a elderly woman talking about everyone else having radiation poisoning; but, that really would not work

with keeping the lost episode idea fully there because River could save everyone then(there were also other reasons it didn't work; see under Notes for Alternate Takes Junkyard under the first deleted scene(s) for the episode A Dying Wish for more info)

2) Wash more lightly talking with River in the teaser and Wash lightly talking with Kaylee as a short break from thinking about the tragedy on Beylix are both refreshing changes of pace; more light talks with Wash seem to have been missing for several episodes, and it was a good way to balance out this episode

3) Kaylee and River look for a good place on the factory to set up the antenna for the spare Cortex screen for the townsfolk; with the plan being to contact them when they can get into EV suits and come aboard Serenity(so they can be rescued by the Serenity crew in time)

4) (very much implied) the three mechanics in EV suits, as acting leaders of the townsfolk taking refuge on their own in the factory, medically took care of them and themselves before Simon, Mal, Zoe, and Jayne first come in to the factory; at first, it seems like the townsfolk don't need a doctor after all

5) had one of the biggest surprise twists be that the Serenity crew did everything right to prepare to get Serenity and all the townsfolk off the planet...only for River to recently discover that the townsfolk had been poisoned by solar radiation leaking through the vent on the roof to the food the townsfolk ate just a half hour or so ago(and with medical supplies limited on Serenity as it is, there wouldn't be enough medical supplies to help save the townsfolk from dying in hours one way or another)

--> (related to above; implied well enough) when Kaylee and River found a good place for the antenna on the roof, River only then discovered the solar radiation leaking through the vent on the roof

6) purposely had River hidden in shadow during her private conversation with Mal in his bunk, where its implied well enough in flashes, that she warns him of the townsfolk having solar radiation food poisoning; kept the who in shadow part up in the air to be its

own surprise twist for Act III(could very well be Simon or River warning Mal of the solar radiation food poisoning)

7) wanted to have Jayne and Simon giving each other a hard time in the teaser(even if the only best way to quickly show that was a free-for-all ball game between them), only for the surprise twist at the end of Act II and the beginning of Act III be Jayne and Simon are working together to try to stop Mal from making his difficult decision to leave the townsfolk behind; but, Simon would see this as the only best chance to stop Mal here without getting the rest of the crew worried about it(teaming up with the last person Mal would expect him to team up with)

8) two more surprise twists follow that fit in character too

(1) River helps Mal fly Serenity away from Beylix; despite Simon commandeering the cockpit and heading back to Beylix with some extra oxygen, thanks to his own cunning plan

(2) Jayne thought only the kids could be saved, and so he sent a wave on the Cortex to the townsfolk saying so; behind even Simon's back, because Simon thought he should at least try to save all the townsfolk(even if he had to sooner or later face facts that he couldn't)

9) after Simon tells the rest of the crew of Mal's difficult decision, everyone besides River and Jayne is understandably upset at Mal; but River pointed out beforehand to Mal that it was better in the long run for Simon to break the news to the rest of the crew(because otherwise River's involvement with Mal's difficult decision would be more easily found out, and it could tear the whole crew apart)

--> (related to above[1]) in the midst of Mal's difficult decision in the break of dawn, Simon was knocked out by Mal before he could find out River's involvement

--> (related to above[2]) Mal is too emotionally torn up inside to reveal to anyone else that the townsfolk were already going to die without more medical supplies from another ship in time, or of River outright telling Mal the odds are

even worse than last time(aka the episode Out of Gas); Simon tells Mal he'll never forgive him for this; Jayne isn't angry at either Simon or Mal, but is depressed by the fallout from Mal's difficult decision; Zoe ironically agrees with Jayne that they should've tried to save the kids; Kaylee runs to her bunk crying; River goes to her to try to comfort her; Wash storms off; and Mal ends up alone in the galley

--> (related to above[3]) Mal breaks down crying when he's alone; he takes his fallout with his crew extremely hard, and is contemplating suicide over it all(in the if he "just happened" to get shot in a gunfight kind of way)

10) the dying planet is a wintry planet, according to one of several news articles on the lost episode idea; so went with the planet Beylix

11) but, there was a strong reason why didn't go with the version of Beylix from the central Serenity RPG book; going from mainstream Firefly episodes Trash and Ariel, trash collecting seems fairly easy in the Verse without a whole planet to send most trash to

12) didn't want the ending to be completely heartbreaking though; so the epilogue had some brighter notes to end on

(1) after River mind reading all thirty five townsfolks's dying wishes and hopes(in the midst of Mal's difficult decision), she puts together digital files of diary entries of all thirty five townsfolks's dying wishes and hopes over the course of two weeks; giving them the next best thing to a proper memorial

(2) some weeks later(after River starts her diary entries collection), The Alliance has added watching out for solar flares on Alliance Commander duties on Tohoku Class city ships and Crete class ships

[1] (yet to fully reveal) very much implying River's diary entries collection was enough evidence to convince Parliament to make watching out for solar flares officially part of Alliance Commander duties on Tohoku Class city ships and Crete class ships

[2] (to very much imply later on in retrospect) even with Tohoku Class city ships being decommissioned, they haven't fully been decommissioned at this time

(3) River sneaks a letter over to Jayne for him to find on his own, warning him that Mal is going to try to get himself killed; because Jayne is the only other crewmember beside River who isn't really upset at Mal now; Jayne deeply respects River this time for practically coming to him for help, and he promises to himself that he won't let Mal kill himself(setting up for Jayne stopping Mal from trying to "happen to get killed" in the gunfight for the next episode)

13) no pop culture references; at least out loud

--> can ~~mention what favorites people like, or~~ show action figures or similar; just no quotes or other kind of mention if any from them(if it's well hidden though from first glance, that's a exception for quotes from them[like the two rednecks in Deadpool 2 being two surprise cameos of Alan Tudyk and Matt Damon, with the two of them almost completely unrecognizable in those roles]

14) easter egg for A Dying Wish(at a certain bar table in the teaser of the episode); two cameos as a wink to Battlestar Galactica reboot series fans(just for fun; it's outside of canon for Can't Take The Sky From Us)

[1] Leland "Lee" Adama and Louis Hoshi very much implied to be the two men the man Companion was talking to; Leland Adama and Louis Hoshi are also very much implied to be in a relationship

[2] in light of Leland Adama having relationships with women before on the Battlestar Galactica reboot series, he's bisexual in this continuity

[3] Leland Adama and Louis Hoshi are still living in the 26th century thanks to cryogenics(after the Season 4 series finale Daybreak); the only exception to the rule for forsaking all their technology, and originally just in case their civilization started burning up in the atmo on Earth(aka the fabled Thirteenth Colony)

[4] Leland Adama and Louis Hoshi are revived from cryogenics after Earth-That-Was was destroyed(otherwise this makes less sense with the Battlestar Galactica reboot series); on the plus side, airing a Firefly episode with this easter egg around the time of the Battlestar Galactica 2003 mini-series may not really spoil too much(at first glance, new fans of the Battlestar Galactica reboot series could just as easily assume Leland Adama and Louis Hoshi were revived from cryogenics before the Battlestar Galactica 2003 mini-series began)

[5] also think it would have been good for season one of the Battlestar Galactica reboot series to at least start off with Leland Adama, Felix Gaeta, and Louis Hoshi being together in a poly relationship(even if Felix later on changes loyalties and decides to break up with both of them); then there'd be more than one bisexual man on the Battlestar Galactica reboot series that's a important character

15) the next episode will be the episode with Kalliav's return and Inara's return(the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess), then the episode Double Jayne Trouble, then The Box Show as the Season 2 finale, and then the bonus episode After Miranda as part of special features for Can't Take the Sky From Us

16) notable Chinese saying(s) for A Dying Wish

[1] (when Mal looks up toward the coming down cluster of burning asteroids)

Zhèngzài xià yǔ ránshāo de hóuzi hé jì! = it's raining burning monkeys and cum!

[2] (when Wash checks the scanner readings on the cluster of burning asteroids and finds out what's really coming for Beylix[scanner readings from Serenity's scanners])

Tiāntáng lǐ de gǒu shǐ!! = holy heaven's dogs' feces!!

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for A Dying Wish]

Admittedly? For even me writing this episode? This one was emotionally tough.

I don’t usually write such a depressing episode or chapter in any fanfiction story I’ve written for.

But... In light of this episode being around the last big unproduced idea for Firefly?

I felt I should stick to that unproduced idea to the letter as best I can: Even if it hurts.

I tried to add as many lighter moments as I could think of for this episode to balance it out.

But... It still felt as dark(if not more so) as the episode Hellbound.

Meanwhile... Politics in America were as dark as that episode.

I thought it would be good to have a lighter K Plus fanfiction Firefly story to help readers not feel too depressed by the episode A Dying Wish.

But... At the time... I regrettably couldn’t think of a good idea for that.

At first? I thought of several possibilities for it.

I thought of a news show by River and/or Saffron. I thought of a Firefly Halloween party with the board game Firefly Clue worked in(only it's more for fun rather than real betrayal, and not a board game). I thought of a next generation Mulan story with the Unification War and Firefly characters(with Inara as the 26th century Mulan, Saffron on her own side, and Atherton as the leader of the Huns).

I was tempted to write either one of these. But...

Here's why I rejected all three ideas:

1) Any topic I could think of for a news show by River and/or Saffron?

It's very likely already done better than I could:

In the Firefly book Back from the Black.

It is a collection of funny cartoons with Firefly characters on Earth. Enough said there.

2) Running the premise of Firefly Clue as a party game by the Serenity crew is too nonsensical.

Too many crewmembers would be too uncomfortable with the idea: Even just for a party game.

Even Simon and River would be too uncomfortable with the idea.

3) I felt a next generation animated Disney Mulan fanfiction story by me with Firefly characters would tear down the Verse of Firefly too much and have the story not be enjoyable.

Inara is the most like Mulan out of Firefly characters. But, where would that leave Zoe?

The Alliance would become too sexist to still have shades of gray as a government:

Because otherwise... How else would Inara have to prove women can fight like men in a next generation Mulan story?

Yes: A key part of the Firefly show is that we still have plenty of problems in the 26th century(Even though it's the future).

But... Sexism from the Companions Guild, the Browncoats, and/or The Alliance as a whole?

Are you kidding me?

The whole point of strong protection for Companions in case of someone trying to sexually violate them wouldn't even exist with more sexism.

Yeah. That's too much of a black mark for me to even consider as part of the Firefly Verse.

On a completely different lighter note...

Before the episode After Miranda?

I wanted to start a wave of fan favorite characters from Firefly coming back for cameos in the remaining episodes.

Monty appeared in the teaser for this episode.

Inara was set to appear in Kaylee, Get Your Priestess. Kalliav and who's left of her gang reappear later on in that episode.

Saffron was set to appear in the episode Double Jayne Trouble. Durran Haymer appears later on in that episode.

Also...

I really liked writing Jayne's and Simon's double crosses in Act III of A Dying Wish. They were very much in character and yet mindblowing at the same time.

On a slightly lighter note...

I realized there was only one way to still have the crew later on come back together as a crew. It would be to leave the door open to have a full reveal to the rest of the crew that the thirty five townsfolk were very likely going to die in hours anyway from radiation poisoning from food.

That full reveal comes in the next episode(Kaylee, Get your Priestess).

At that point in time... Everything would sooner or later be mostly be okay with the crew.

But... Simon continues to be ~~very~~ quite distrustful of Mal in a way:

All the way to the movie Serenity.

That makes all too much sense really.

Also(spoilers warning for Serenity movie)...

The Serenity crew later on not being as quick to try to mutiny against Mal over a strikingly similar situation? That makes all too much sense in the Serenity movie.

Mal, hoping to get to the planet Miranda in Reaver space and find something to clear the whole crew out of them being hunted by The Alliance, orders his crew to get to work turning Serenity into a Reaver ship.

This is even though almost everyone on the crew has protested over Mal's plan.

Even when Mal threatens to shoot down anyone if they're not with him because "there are a lot of fine ways to die. And, I ain't waiting for The Alliance to choose mine"?

The rest of the crew doesn't even argue with Mal then:

Because some of them tried to mutiny against Mal in the episode A Dying Wish, everyone besides River finds out the full story behind Mal's difficult decision in the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess(because River already knew), everyone but Simon was relatively more quick to forgive Mal in light of this, and the whole rest of the crew besides River have learned the hard way that when there's no other way to save the crew that they should listen to Mal(because he's still very likely to be right).

On a lighter big note...

I wanted to balance out more gay representation through Can't Take the Sky From Us.

So... I put in three very much implied to be gay or bisexual men in the teaser for A Dying Wish.

Before someone may ask? All three men didn't die on Beylix(one of them is a Companion with his own ship, and that's the ship they took to evacuate from Beylix in time).

I had hoped that part was implied well enough with how I started off Act I.

But... Being more explicit here about it might be welcome to some people.

I thought it would be nice to show what a man Companion who doesn't have ripped jeans would look like.

That Companion shown in the episode A Dying Wish is one I made up.

At first glance? The two men at the table with the man Companion in the episode teaser were just woken up a few hundred years ago from cryogenics.

But... There's much more to these two characters than that.

They're really well hidden cameos(like Deadpool 2 level of well hidden cameos) of Battlestar Galactica reboot series characters:

Specifically Captain Leland "Lee" Adama(aka also with the call sign Apollo) and Communications Officer Louis Hoshi(from the Pegasus).

The inspiration for these two well hidden cameos of Battlestar Galactica reboot characters is in itself kind of a long story.

Many months earlier...

I, in my research on Firefly related everything, came across the web series Con Man.

The web series Con Man is created by, mostly written, mostly directed, and mostly starring Alan Tudyk.

The show Spectrum from within Con Man, purposely parodying Firefly, also seemed to me to be parodying more shows than just Firefly.

I watched the trailer for Con Man. And, that's what led me to think The Battlestar Galactica reboot series was most likely also being parodied in Spectrum.

I glimpsed at the official comic for Spectrum. And, it seemed to solidify that conclusion.

After that? I researched quite a bit of the Battlestar Galactica reboot series.

I wanted to see if there were any more ideas for Firefly episodes I could find there.

Eventually...

I found out three interesting things on sexuality in the Battlestar Galactica reboot series that had me thinking back to Firefly:

1) Jane Espenson was a writer on the Battlestar Galactica reboot series for several episodes in season 3 to season 4...and on a web series tie-in called Face of the Enemy.

2) Ronald D. Moore(head developer on the Battlestar Galactica reboot series), was very tempted to + wanted to go beyond the Sci-Fi channel's normal restrictions on sexuality(where the Battlestar Galactica reboot series first aired).

This was at least confirmed as far back as the movie Battlestar Galactica: Razor. It's a movie tie-in to Battlestar Galactica.

Thanks to a joint effort with Universal Studios Home Entertainment? Battlestar Galactica: Razor allowed for more creative freedom than on most episodes of the Battlestar Galactica reboot.

3) The Battlestar Galactica reboot mini-series in 2003 was a 2-parter pilot created in the hope of getting a full Battlestar Galactica series made.

Keeping all of this in mind?

The casts and crews of Firefly and the Battlestar Galactica reboot series creatively joining forces to retroactively have stronger representation of gay men to Battlestar Galactica fans in circumvention of Sci-Fi channel restrictions on sexuality? I could totally see that happening.

If Firefly was airing new episodes for a second season around the same time as the Battlestar Galactica reboot 2003 mini-series? That wouldn't be far off here.

And... With strong chemistry in fanfiction with Captain Leland "Lee" Adama and Felix?

Pairing off Lee and Louis Hoshi before and after the Battlestar Galactica reboot series officially started having episodes in 2004 in the first place? That was too good of a mindscrew for me to pass up for writing this pair of well hidden cameos.

The Can’t Take the Sky From Us episode A Dying Wish may be very dark.

But... On the lighter side?

I could be happy enough with that Battlestar Galactica reboot series hidden gem of a pairing as its own implied well enough lighter story.

Kaylee, Get Your Priestess

a episode titled Kaylee, Get Your Priestess; based on a unproduced episode idea where Kaylee has to goes undercover as a Companion to save the crew(after Serenity: Better Days episode or 2-parter); but scrap the "has to train her to be a girly girl" part(I explain on why down below)

1) from Jose Molina's own words:

"[...]where Kaylee had to go undercover in a heist as a Companion, ~~and so Inara has to train her to be a girly girl~~. The idea was that our guys get caught in the middle of a robbery and thrown in jail and will be executed, and the only way of getting them out was for Kaylee to do what Inara did in 'The Train Job'."

--> scrap the “has to train her to be a girly girl” part; because it’s insulting to Kaylee’s character

2) Kaylee doesn’t need to be “trained to be a girly girl”; she would more likely need to be trained to act to give love to someone she doesn’t want to(which she’d very reluctantly do to save the crew, given her own personal opinion on sex)

3) Kaylee has been studying the Companion lessons Inara gave her from Better Days, Part 2; has also been practicing them in private in her bunk over time(but, because River can read minds, River would of course correct Kaylee if she on a academic level thinks Kaylee gets something wrong on Inara’s Companion lessons)

4) (very much implied) in retrospect, Kaylee’s only two big reluctances at this time(the time of the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess) with making love to someone she doesn’t know at first are her big crush on Simon and her wanting to save “her ‘nethers” for him ever since she fell in love with him(as in wanting to save up having sex for having sex with Simon); because Kaylee sure didn’t have a problem with making love to Bester in the first few days they knew each other(before they broke up; but, still...), and Kaylee still likes to see good in others whenever possible(even to the point of being along the lines of Saffron doing literally anything for anyone she likes)

5) for this episode, Inara is her bodyguard instead of the Companion(since all the big guns on the crew are locked up and can’t help protect Kaylee); but, Inara and Kaylee use earwigs so Inara can advise Kaylee a little if necessary

6) should also be on a Outer Rim planet; since being thrown in jail and executed in one go is not The Alliance’s style(they’d rather throw someone in jail for interrogation or execute right away to “free the world from sin”, not both in any scenario)

7) have some flashbacks for Inara; going back to some scenes with Inara that were originally going to be for the episode Those Left Behind[revealing these scenes in the Season 2 episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess]

[1] after Councilor Rena mostly physically recovers from her wounds on Ezra, Inara goes to see how she is; Councilor Rena tells Inara she can't relax anymore with her in light of what's happened(she doesn't hate Inara for wanting to protect her crew, but she wants a personal bodyguard grade Companion that would be better at protecting her than a escort from Ezra[and she knows Inara well enough to know she would never be fully herself or like it on Ezra])

[2] just before Inara leaves Serenity, Simon tells Inara that he has a working theory for a temporary cure for her epidplasa(so she could live to see 45); in part thanks to River in recent days expanding on his notes on a cure for Inara's epidplasa(back from the 2-parter episode Better Days) with her own notes

--> ironically, Simon is able to come up with a temporary cure for Inara's condition so Inara can for sure live to see 45 ~~50 or 55~~(who had become part of the Serenity crew from the beginning of the series[around the same time Inara did])

--> with his expertise in brain trauma, reverse engineering a similar treatment to calm nerves down through the brain(and to operate on Inara precise enough without more injury to her to strengthen her skin elasticity with surgically placed skin grafts) is a little easier than finding a cure for River's brain trauma

8) the kicker is Kalliav Niska is the one who used her influence to plant evidence at the scene of a murder to make it look like Mal and most of his crew are guilty; long enough to throw them in jail so that she and her crime syndicate can come to the Rim planet and kill them all all the easier(with most of Mal's crew in jail and not much Alliance authority in Kalliav's way)

--> (related to above[1]) Kalliav saw a opportunity to come after Mal's crew without Saffron coming after her; because Saffron's big plan to work her way up through The Alliance and try to "more legally" get rid of the bounties on Mal's crew is coming close to completion(in the next episode), she is too busy then to catch Kalliav in the act

--> (related to above[2]; at least implied a little) that also means Kalliav knows of Saffron's big plan just from a educated guess; but Kalliav thinks she can turn her in anytime, and she thinks it's more fun to first come after Inara, Jayne, and Mal in that case

--> (related to above[3]; at least implied a little) and Kalliav seeing the look on Saffron's face if she tells Saffron she ratted her out and killed Jayne just before Saffron gets caught by The Alliance would be reward enough to her(and at least a little easier for Kalliav to take her out one way or another when she tries to angrily put up a fight against her anyway[and then Saffron to be executed by The Alliance because of no longer seeing her as a potential asset against bigger criminals])

9) (yet to fully reveal in this episode; done) the aftermath to explicitly say ~~very much imply~~ that River's diary entries collection was enough evidence to convince Parliament to make watching out for solar flares officially part of Alliance Commander duties on Tohoku Class city ships and Crete class ships; thanks to Saffron, with the latest part she's playing, using her political influence to submit River's diary entries collection to Parliament as evidence for the truth around the tragedy of Beylix(combined with Inara's own political influence to get Alliance politicians to listen)

10) after Simon's engineering stunt to give Serenity some extra oxygen in the episode A Dying Wish, Kaylee and Simon rework Serenity's primary life support system and auxiliary life support system(including the ship's vents) to also act as a compression air system for stored up reserve auxiliary power for Serenity's engine(using one of the oxygen tanks Simon used before like a testing tube to help him and Kaylee test temperature differences from vent to vent)

--> (related to above; yet to get into for the next episode[done])

even if Serenity's engine isn't turning, auxiliary power(and auxiliary life support along with it) could still keep for a day; with Serenity's engine still running, kicking in auxiliary power could have Serenity go to full burn twice in a row(but it'll put a bigger strain on the ship, and parts of Serenity could start flying off if not careful enough)

11) Kaylee is still really upset at Mal over his difficult choice in A Dying Wish, and still can't believe he would leave those townsfolk to die; not knowing what River and Mal fully know(that the townsfolk were already going to die without more medical supplies from another ship in time)

12) when Inara and Kaylee meet in person for the first time in months, Kaylee soon tells Inara of what happened on Beylix, and of the rest of the crew getting arrested and framed for murder(that is likely not tied to anyone that died on Beylix, but it sure isn't assuring much either)

--> (related to above) and, with what happened on Beylix, Kaylee asks Inara why Mal would ever do such a terrible thing

13) (kind of scrapped and kind of not) a shaken Inara soon tells Kaylee she knows everything important about Mal, and that he'd always rush in to save someone if he could

14) Kaylee wants to believe Inara; but, Kaylee demands to know how she's so sure then if she isn't telling her why

15) Inara almost tells her about Mal's darkest secret to try to help her; but, Inara instead points out that she's heard quite some war stories where soldiers had to leave behind one of their own in the Unification War to save the rest of their units, because a good number of her clients in the past have been soldiers who fought in the Unification War(mostly soldiers on the Alliance side, but some Browncoats as well)

--> (at least very much implied) Inara kept her Alliance clients secret from her Browncoat clients, and vice versa; but, she was mostly honest with both her Alliance clients and her Browncoat clients(she just held back a few things of her true feelings from each of them, like most any well trained Companion could do)

16) Kaylee even outright admits she wants to love her captain as a friend again

17) Kaylee feels a little better now from Inara's explanation + Kaylee soon realizes that she should at least hear out Mal's side of the story to know for sure if there was more going on to Mal's difficult decision than she thought or not

--> and Inara completely agrees with her

18) (scrapped; too dark for this episode, because Inara would find a much better way than this[and the first two deleted scenes for Kaylee, Get Your Priestess are a little dark for this episode anyway, one way or another])

to prove Inara is really her in the beginning of Act II, she brings out her black vial that protects herself from Reavers and she reveals that Saffron didn't really graduate from the Companion academy; so, Saffron couldn't have kept a black vial from the Companion academy(off of academy grounds after graduation), because The Guild and Alliance Intelligence would work together to arrest someone who stole a black vial and the black vials have tracers on them(no one has successfully got away with a black vial)

19) originally thought of Atherton Wing going after Mal in the teaser; but, thought it'd be better in the long run to instead have one of Rance's men that still lived by at the end of the episode Heart of Gold Revisited(or the original version of the episode) go after Mal in the teaser

--> (related to above) because thought it'd be better to instead keep it up in the air of who the big bad guy is that is out for revenge on the Serenity crew in this episode all the way up to the end of Act II(with the big reveal of Kalliav being behind it all in the end of Act II)

20) some inspiration for Kaylee, Get Your Priestess

[1] the planet Verces from the Starfinder RPG game

[2] the scene of tricking Mr. Waternoose into admitting his evil plot from the 2001 movie Monsters, Inc.

21) Notable Chinese sayings in Kaylee, Get Your Priestess

[1] (when sheriff Ramsey Durst is angrily crying out in the direction of the assassin) zhū gōngjī xīpán!! = pig cock sucker!!

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Kaylee, Get Your Priestess]

This episode is a strong comeback to lighter days on Serenity:

For the Serenity crew to come together again like family and as a crew.

It's as I planned it to be and more.

The teaser for the episode may not have had it seem that way at first glance.

But... River's surprisingly lighter attitude overall in the teaser very much implies what's to come later on in the episode.

Also...

I thought it would be best in the long run to chronologically place the murder of the sheriff and the sheriff's wife before Serenity even arrives on Sho-Je. It was to, without a doubt, show that Mal couldn't possibly have murdered those two people.

I liked screwing with expectations with how the teaser ended.

Kaylee is running back for Serenity. And, most readers would assume that more of the episode would be around Kaylee running back to Serenity(as the episode title suggests).

But... Nope.

Kaylee makes it back fast to Serenity because it's only a block or so away anyway.

As for the two flashbacks for Inara? They were planned in advance.

I thought filling in some more blanks for Inara's life would be welcome bittersweet notes.

Connecting more of the dots for the aftermath of the tragedy of Beylix was very satisfying for me.

River's plan to bring the Serenity crew back together in the long run was originally planned too.

It's not outright called out in the episode. But...

River could have easily escaped from deputies or handcuffs if she really wanted to:

With some other members of the Serenity crew escaping with her.

Why else would River let herself get arrested with almost everyone else? There's no other good reason to.

Why else would River tell Kaylee to run to come back to help them? River would know Kaylee would most likely turn to Inara for help then(and knowing Inara, River knew Inara would help Kaylee through her mixed feelings on Mal).

Also...

The Serenity crew fully coming to terms with Mal's decision, in the wake of the central truth of it fully revealed by River, circles back around to plenty of character transformations for the crew already as it is(for reasons already brought up around the original plan for the episode A Dying Plan).

It's very much implied in the teaser that Zoe was only trying to get along more with Jayne because she was looking to fill a void left by Mal from the episode A Dying Wish. She, at the time, can't help but think that maybe she has lost Mal as a friend.

That is...until of course the Serenity crew comes together again like family and as a crew.

Then, Zoe and Mal are back to being close friends.

Also...

Mal and Kalliav really wanted revenge on each other:

With Mal justifiably blaming her for Eli Sandusta's death at the very least.

Eli Sandusta would be alive for longer if it wasn't for the Niska syndicate abducting him and letting the stress of it all kill him.

Kalliav blames Mal and the rest of the Serenity crew for killing her husband Adelai Niska.

Mal getting to kill Kalliav is in retrospect a good touch:

Because here’s the time where Mr. or Mrs. Niska didn't just escape from Mal’s wrath(like in the episode War Stories).

That in a way comes full circle for Mal.

I tried to think of another torture device for Kalliav to present that fit best for her. But...

Yeah: The only one that came to mind to me for her was the electric chair.

Still...

It’s historical and not originally from pop culture. So, this felt okay for this episode to me.

Kaylee, in a way, being trained by Inara to give love to someone she doesn’t love to help save the crew? That turned out to be not as much a struggle as I originally planned.

But... The ending of the episode was all the better for it in the long run.

Some big parts of the episode weren’t originally planned. But...

They’re also some of the best parts.

Here’s more on those parts:

1) Ironically, Simon and Kaylee get closer in their temporary shared hatred for Mal.

There may be plenty of bittersweet teariness in the teaser. But, there's no denying Simon and Kaylee are getting closer to becoming a couple.

This also fits very well for Simon, who is all too used to being on the run to protect his sister River.

He gets closer to Kaylee...with both of them with a shared interest in protecting each other(even though their shared hatred for Mal doesn't last).

It also leads to a priceless scene of River thinking "she's a chaperone for them".

2) Creating a version of Sho-Je Downs that not only made possible a unproduced idea from Alan Tudyk(a planet that's mostly night on one side and mostly day on the other), but also a planet wide government with a community of Native Americans in power that is culturally respectful to Native Americans.

I did quite some research on Native American fashion in recent years:

Because I wanted to do my best to be respectful to their cultures(even if their religious customs aren't brought up in the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess).

3) The big fight against Kalliav and her syndicate is a good and interesting change of pace.

It not only feels epic:

It has Zoe and Jayne, for most of the fight, out of the action due to still being locked in a cell until they can break out.

This leaves Kaylee, Inara, and Mal to do most of the fighting in the big fight.

Also...

Simon's reaction to Kaylee using a tear gas grenade to take down and not kill Tyrus? That was priceless.

4) The end scene with Simon and Kaylee talking about second thoughts:

With a montage of the Serenity crew being like a family again overlaid over the last part.

I was originally going to just go with the Serenity crew playing a Tall Card game for the montage. But, I thought the montage works better for this episode.

The end scene also explicitedly explains the bigger reason for why Kaylee wanted to take Companion lessons from Inara in the first place(even though Kaylee isn't out looking to be a Companion for a career choice).

It also leaves the door open for two important things in continuity with the Serenity movie:

Until the end of the Serenity movie? Simon and Kaylee still don't have sex.

Until the end of the Serenity movie? They don't fully become a couple, because of at least one more mental episode with River between now and then(implying the episode The Box Show).

Plus...

Simon's mixed feelings over most of the crew are both funny and fits all too well for him:

Because it reminds me a lot of the ending for the Disney movie Sky High.

In Simon's mind on this episode overall?

Inara became more like Saffron, Kaylee became more like Inara, River became more like a crazy mastermind(with River not telling Simon in advance her plan to bring the crew back together), Simon is back to being quite unsure of Mal(at the very least over knowing of Mal's dark secret well enough), and Simon's very idea of a perfect world has been turned upside down again in a new light(with Simon's idea of a perfect world not having to change much and still getting to date Kaylee).

Yes: This episode leaves the door open for Kaylee and Simon to try dating in the next episode(in the episode Double Jayne Trouble[not long before the next mental episode with River]).

Still... When does Simon ever have it easy when it comes to dating? Ever?

Double Jayne Trouble

A episode titled Double Jayne Trouble;

Saffron ends up as a Alliance passenger on Serenity under The Alliance part she's playing(to work her way up through The Alliance and try to "more legally" get rid of the bounties on Mal's crew), much to Saffron's and Jayne's mixed feelings that unfold

(a episode that's kind of a sequel to the Firefly book The Magnificent Nine)

1) Jayne is getting too impatient to see Saffron again; and Saffron, only now realizing how impatient Jayne can be, finds herself struggling hard to keep her cover and to not let Jayne down(because if Saffron lets her cover get blown by Jayne, she and Jayne will both be let down by it)

--> (related to above[1]) Saffron secretly goes to Mal or Kaylee for help

--> (related to above[2]) also have a flashback to Saffron and Kaylee meeting again a day or so after the episode with Kalliav's and Inara's return ~~before Saffron ends up as a passenger on Serenity under the Alliance part she's~~

~~playing~~(with putting in the deleted scene Just Something Good To Remind Me from Better Days Part 2[mostly the same scene; but hello instead of goodbye])

--> (related to above[3]; scrapped) it's also revealed that because Saffron's big plan was coming close to completion(around the time of the episode with Kalliav's and Inara's return), Saffron didn't just stop by to say hello to Kaylee; in spite of still struggling some with holding back her sexual attraction to Kaylee, Saffron stayed with Kaylee in person for a day to try hard to comfort Kaylee in the aftermath of the episode with Kalliav's and Inara's return(with Kaylee's lingering mixed feelings on giving love to someone she didn't love as a undercover Companion to help break out the Serenity crew[and Saffron, being Saffron, completely understands what Kaylee is going through]); which is why Kaylee is back to being her mostly cheerful self all the sooner by the episode Double Jayne Trouble

2) while that's going on, Kalliav left one last "present" for the Serenity crew

--> before Kalliav gets captured or killed in the previous episode, she discovered the true father of Jane McCloud and broke the news to her; Jane McCloud storms off of Thetis, leaving her mother Temperance McCloud behind

3) Kalliav also broke the news to Jane McCloud that Jayne and Saffron likely still are dating; but, Kalliav also purposely mislead Jane McCloud to think history is repeating itself over Saffron(and that Saffron is planning to backstab him just to finish the job Elias Vandal gave her before he died, as a mirror to Temperance being raped by Elias Vandal years ago)

4) Jane McCloud, now knowing her biological father is Elias Vandal, isolates herself from Temperance to try to protect her from getting killed herself by Saffron(even though it's a gravely mistaken impression by this point in time, it's a mirror to Temperance isolating herself from Jayne to try to protect Jayne from getting killed by Elisa Vandal years ago); and thinking Jayne needs saving from Saffron, Jane McCloud goes to extremes to try to kill or turn in Saffron "for Jayne's own good"

5) ironically, it's Jane McCloud going to extremes and calling out Jayne by name that leads to The Alliance very reluctantly teaming up with the Serenity crew to try to take her down all the better; the bounties on their heads are held off until the mission is over(given the circumstances)

--> (related to above[1]; scrapped, because too convoluted)

with help from intel and a hidden shuttle pre-prepared in Jane McCloud's name on Thetis(all thanks to Kalliav), Jane McCloud steals Durran Haymer's bio-weapon to threaten to wipe out the town the Serenity crew is staying in and several more if Saffron doesn't turn herself in; but that also attracts Durran's attention, and he wants his bio-weapon back and Saffron back no matter what(pretending to go over to Jane McCloud's side so that he can retake his bio-weapon and get Saffron in the same day)

--> (related to above[2]; kind of scrapped and kind of not)

with help from some of Kalliav's intel, Jane McCloud had found out Kalliav was planning to take the Lassiter(the same one that was Durran's) for herself by force and upgrade it with working parts(not long before or after the episode with Kalliav's return and Inara's return) to take out Saffron one way or another(in case it did come down to a fight between Kalliav and Saffron); so Jane McCloud herself contacts Durran Haymer and makes him a deal he can't refuse(that she'll give over where and who has his Lassiter for him to take it back for himself in exchange for teaming up with her to try to kill or turn in Saffron "for her own good")

--> (related to above[3]) but Durran Haymer and Jane McCloud hide their alliance at first, so they can make it look like Jane McCloud stole Durran Haymer's bio-weapon and blame Katen(Kalliav's best friend) for being the accomplice instead

--> (related to above[4]) that is, until Durran and Jane McCloud show up on the same side to take down Saffron and Jayne; but Jane McCloud only wants to knock out Jayne and not get him killed; unlike Durran, which might very well mean Jane McCloud turns on him too to protect Jayne

6) Durran meets Saffron again, and likely the first time he meets Jayne face to face

7) (scrapped) Durran gives her one last chance to turn herself over to him in exchange for not ending up in a prison cell; but Saffron flat out refuses this time, saying that being in bed with him was a big mistake to begin with and that she loves Jayne now

8) (kind of scrapped and kind of not; only implied at least a little in the episode)

Durran still can't bring himself to outright shoot Saffron because he still loves her; but, he angrily tries to take Saffron out so he could have her put in a prison cell(and let The Alliance make its own judgment if she should be alive or not[yet that is mostly out of Durran's unshakeable loyalty to The Alliance; believing they won't outright kill her unless she deserves it for killing a Alliance guard or something])

9) (kind of scrapped and kind of not) Jayne and Saffron fight Durran and Jane McCloud together; with Saffron not running off this time to try to handle the big fight by herself like in the 2-parter Better Days

10) (scrapped) Jayne's old flame Temperance McCloud looking for revenge, to get Jayne back as her lover(and very jealous of Saffron), or both

11) (mostly only hinted at in retrospect) [more on Alliance Parliament]

(1) Parliament members <-- ministers <-- clerks

(2) among Parliament members, Lords for those that like to use full names

(3) Alliance ministers draft laws + present cases for Parliament(but cases have to be approved of by the Alliance Prime Minister or Alliance Intelligence first)

--> they wear diplomatic dress robes that are mostly gray, but similar to Magistrate Higgins's clothes; can choose red or blue or yellow dress ribbons though(three out of four colors from The Alliance flag)

(4) Alliance Parliament clerks are parliamentary assistants;

office assistants(not lawyers)

(5) Alliance Parliament Special Committees

--> Efficiency Affairs Committee(supervisory for all committees)

--> Internal and Judicial Committee

--> Financial and Economical Committee

--> Science, Environmental, Resources, and Public Health Committee (SERPH for short)

--> Cultural Affairs and Education Committee(archival restoration legal disputes included)

--> Military and Intelligence Committee

(6) [more on the Military and Intelligence Committee]

but only Alliance ministers directly chosen by them can be permanent members on this special committee, and only Alliance individuals approved by them with security clearance can disclose law with them behind closed doors

12) Saffron's inside job is a "Doctor grade" Companion for Minister Daniel Gillian; Minister Daniel Gillian is a member of the Science, Environmental, Resources, and Public Health Committee

13) but, Daniel Gillian, like quite a number of rich Alliance folk, strongly prefer more old fashioned needles than going to a Alliance hospital; publically refusing Alliance government sanctioned medical care is illegal and is punishable by withholding all of a Alliance citizen's money until the citizen complies or until the citizen is forced into a Alliance hospital due to starvation or dehydration(but some rich Alliance folk will pay through the black market to get a fake Doctor grade Companion[unlicensed in a more secret manner than most unlicensed Companions(or whores)] on purpose to get the Alliance to assume their medical needs are met by Alliance government sanctioned medical care anyway, which also means these fake Doctor grade Companions never get reported on to the Guild by most any folks)

14) Saffron also got a wig this time to further help mask her real identity from within the walls of Parliament

15) Saffron is close to getting a security clearance as a Alliance Intelligence agent for the Military and Intelligence Committee(helped in large part by Saffron taking most of the credit for River's collection of diary entries of the dying wishes of people on Beylix); resolving the next mess for Alliance Intelligence to clean up is Saffron's trial run

16) if Saffron succeeds at this trial run and gets most of the credit for it too, she could get a free pardon for anyone of her choice as a free gift from Alliance Intelligence for starting to more officially work for them; long as she would "keep a eye on the Serenity crew to make sure they don't cause anymore Alliance trouble"(it could even be a pardon for Malcolm Reynolds himself)

--> then it wouldn't take much for Book's and Inara's spy network to kind of slowly but surely infiltrate Alliance Parliament and take over Parliament for a better tomorrow for the Serenity crew and beyond; or lead a all-out revolution against The Alliance with a much higher chance of succeeding than Zoe trying a all-out revolution(from the 2-parter Better Days)

17) (scrapped) Durran Haymer himself delivers the news about the hostage situation on Shiva to Serenity on a private line over the Cortex

18) (scrapped; too convoluted) as part of her trial for getting accepted into the Alliance Military and Intelligence Committee, Saffron commandeers Serenity when the news about the hostage situation on Shiva comes to Serenity on a private line over the Cortex; and it turns out Minister Daniel Gillian also knows this because he's been a partner in crime with Saffron with helping Book's and Inara's spy network(which makes Jayne jealous of Minister Daniel Gillian, and tensions form between both of them)

19) (scrapped; because too dark for this episode, and because Saffron wouldn't reveal that much of herself to someone she just met[even if that someone is Jayne's daughter in spirit])

Saffron feels she has no other way to convince Jane McCloud she can be trusted, and so Saffron gives Jane McCloud a Alli-ray disc that undeniably proves Saffron's tragic backstory is true

20) Jane McCloud[going from the Firefly novel The Magnificent Nine]

[1] 14 years old; teenage daughter of Temperance McCloud

[2] can give a piercing glare

[3] headstrong, stubborn streak a mile wide, always finished what she started and never backed down from a challenge

[4] good friends with River, good friends with Jayne, likes Zoe, neither enemies nor friends of Mal(Jane just feels in the middle about him)

21) notable Chinese sayings for the episode Double Jayne Trouble

[1] [when Simon first hears Jayne's claim about River stealing Vera]

Níng nǐ de qiāng kuàilè de gāowán!! = Screw your gun happy testicles!!

[2] [when Mal sees the pre-recorded wave from Alliance Intelligence revealing Jane McCloud holding hostages; or so they think]

Tā mā dì dìyù zuǐ cóng gāo!! = Fucking hell mouths from on high!!

--> also a Easter egg in itself; anachronistically referencing a Hellmouth from Buffy: The Vampire Slayer

[3] [when Saffron sees Durran Haymer has killed Minister Gillan in cold blood]

[...] xīniú tā mā de son zi de érzi!! = rhino fucking son of a bitch!!

[4] [when Wash is relieved about himself and everyone else on Serenity surviving through double high burn/full burn]

Tiānkōng zhōng de fèifèi = Baboons in the sky

22) some inspiration for the episode Double Jayne Trouble

[1] The Doom Slayer from the 2016 Doom video game; for Jayne's T-shirt design in this episode(Jayne's "Reaver Slayer Man" T-shirt)

[2] Brenda Leonides in the 2017 movie Crooked House; for Saffron's inside job

---

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for Double Jayne Trouble]

As soon as I heard about the book Firefly: The Magnificent Nine...

I thought having kind of a sequel to it would be a great way to give Jayne a final arc for Can't Take the Sky From Us.

This episode took longer to start writing than I expected:

Because library delays kept me from getting Firefly: The Magnificent Nine for two months.

In the meantime... I wrote two surprise fanfiction stories to help with the wait(one was even a what-if parody Firefly and Muppets Tonight crossover).

For people who wanted to read The Magnificent Nine first before reading through most of the episode Double Jayne Trouble? I thought a good way to give a spoilers warning sign was with the end of Act 1 for this episode.

But... Just in case?

I decided to give a spoilers warning on my profile the day I posted the episode Double Jayne Trouble.

Jane McCloud, Temperance McCloud, and Elias Vandal are all from Firefly: The Magnificent Nine. I didn't make them up.

For the episode Double Jayne Trouble? I have done my best to give cliff notes of what happened in The Magnificent Nine so that readers wouldn't have to read it first.

And... Aside from calling Jane McCloud a spitting image of Temperance in ways?

The book never told exactly what Jane McCloud looks like. So, I gave her her own image.

I realized adding a flashback with Mal and Inara to around the beginning of Firefly: The Magnificent Nine was the best way to put it in continuity with Can't Take the Sky From Us(without undoing anything I've already written for Can't Take The Sky From Us).

It was also bittersweetly nice to go back to older days with Mal and Inara.

And... I know what you might be asking now.

If Inara wasn't planning to leave Serenity back then... Why wouldn't Mal and Inara finally get together soon after Vandal was killed and the Scourers were defeated(in the book Firefly: The Magnificent Nine)?

Here's my explanation for why:

Because Inara wasn't planning on leaving back then? Mal was in a better mood at the shindig.

He, more unsure than nervous, danced with a certain local lady for a longer time.

Inara misinterprets that to mean Mal plans to stay on Thetis with the local lady instead of staying on Serenity(to be captain for his crew or to be with Inara).

So... Inara storms off for the night.

Mal unsuccessfully tries to catch up to her to explain himself.

And... He goes back to the town square without a dance partner.

He then starts drinking plenty for the night.

On another note...

I wanted to mirror River's journey in the episode Objects in Space. But, with Jayne.

Here's why:

Because then even River would have some sympathy for him in the episode Double Jayne Trouble.

It was the only way Jayne could still be part of the crew after the big stunt he pulled with worrying Simon sick over his sister's mental episodes.

Mal saying Saffron has been more a adult lately than Jayne though? I thought that was funny and priceless.

Mal's awkward conversation with Saffron in his bunk was funny and priceless too.

Also...

I gathered up bits and pieces of things the crew likes to do in their free time that I hadn't had the chance to bring up before. It was all to lighten the mood of the episode overall.

There was Simon and Kaylee on a official date with nothing going wrong. I really liked doing that.

There was finally getting to show off double full burn(implied at least quite a bit back in the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess). I really liked doing that too.

For the final fight with Durran Haymer and Jane McCloud Vs. Jayne and Saffron? It was originally planned many months ago to be more of a all out brawl.

But... Even deleted scenes for a alternate and extended version of that fight ended up quite different than originally planned.

In the alternate and extended version of the fight... Durran Haymer is doing most of the fighting while Jane McCloud was just planning to knock out Jayne.

In the final cut of the episode... Especially with the injuries Jayne got from the cave-in?

It turned out Jayne was going to be too exhausted to fight back much:

Especially with a gun pointed right at his head on top of everything else.

But... I tried my best to keep as many of the best parts of that first draft as possible.

Also... With Jane McCloud close friends with River in Firefly: The Magnificent Nine?

It made a hell of sense to have River warn Jane McCloud ahead of time Durran can't be trusted.

For Durran Haymer?

Him and his troops going in to take artifacts in the midst of the Unification War makes a creepy kind of sense if it was part of a Alliance Intelligence backed operation meant to try to break the spirits of the Independents(along the lines of Cluny stealing the tapestry of Martin the Warrior in Redwall).

But... It probably only angered the Independents more.

The flashback scene with Saffron and Kaylee was inspired by a deleted scene from Better Days, Part 2.

I originally was going to just have it officially be that flashback. But, with Li Shen's Bazaar as the place.

Then... I realized Saffron and Kaylee, by then, already talked of the events of Better Days.

And... After finishing writing the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess?

I've been wondering if Saffron would soon finally tell Kaylee her own tragic backstory.

So... I finally had Saffron do that a few days before Double Jayne Trouble(in the flashback scene; instead of, in the flashback scene, Kaylee and Saffron talking of the events of Better Days).

That was bittersweetly satisfying to me.

That conversation late at night with Mal and Kaylee in the present was that way too.

And... I can't think of a better note for this episode to end on.

The Box Show

a episode titled The Box Show(instead of a bottle show);

River keeps seeing things past in her real memories and for what could have been that led to her relatively recently bunched up in the cryo box(where she is seen early on; cold but not sleeping at that exact point in time)

(a episode at the end of season 2 or at 3 episodes before the end of Season 2)

1) this episode kind of both a clip show and not a clip show of previous episodes

2) for visions around “what could have been”

[1] (a scrapped idea around “pre-adjustment Mal”) “we’ll have to set this child on fire: It’s the only way to...”; River tries to save the child with holy water or something(baby Mal?)

[2] (a scrapped idea from Alan Tudyk) a wormhole that scrambles your molecules down to the DNA, and only 2 out of 5 senses seem to remain on the other side(then over time, the other senses come back); also random facial hair on hands, faces, whatever

[3] (a alternate take of the episode Not So Set in DNA; likely the vision the episode starts off with in the teaser, only for another vision to come midway through the teaser) where River turns in Davis to The Alliance instead of Kaylee in exchange for keeping his credits to herself, gets enough resources from there for Simon and River to have their own well off farm on a Rim world where The Alliance won’t likely find them, and she keeps all six of the monstrous cattle happy and well fed

--> it was planned to be with River no longer on Serenity and Simon no longer having to stay on Serenity to keep her physically safe, Kaylee becomes the doctor on Serenity in Simon’s absence(but she’s as skilled as field medic[not a genius])

--> when the episode Hellbound came, River still had visions of the Hellhound Class like in the episode and still found out where The Academy is; so, Simon temporarily went back to Serenity to help try to take down The Academy in the episode Hellbound(with most of the crew hoping River sending waves privately to the Serenity crew of collaboratively planning with her to stop The Academy in time would be enough), while Kaylee stayed with River to look after her

--> but, Jayne, Wash, Simon, Mal, and Zoe die trying to stop the Blue Sun Corporation and Alliance Intelligence from taking over everything “for the good of The Alliance”(including the Rim planets)

--> when it's been too long of a wait to wait for Jayne, Zoe, and Mal, Wash and Simon grimly realizes that they're dead; Simon, seeing no other way to stop the Blue Sun Corporation and Alliance Intelligence in time, has himself and Wash detonate enough ships in The Academy to cause a cascade effect to blow up The Academy before reinforcements arrive to the Hellhound Class(which would lead to killing Wash and Simon)

--> Simon sent a wave explaining all of this to River just before the detonating ships went off; Wash tried to pilot both himself and Simon out in time to outrun Alliance Intelligence reinforcements with Serenity(and also buy a little more time for the detonations to go off on The Academy), but Serenity was destroyed by Alliance Intelligence (killing Simon and Wash)

--> River and Kaylee heard the news from the underground, and they were devastated; they've been trying to make it on their own ever since

--> they've also been considering being more than friends; but for when River is eighteen(not before)

[4] (a alternate take of the episode Riverfront) Jaime snuck aboard with River, and River doesn't go crazy until slightly later, Jaime's parent(s) thought he was kidnapped, and River and Jaime very reluctantly had to part ways after plenty of strong convincing from Mal and Kaylee that it isn't right to just take Jaime like this; then, Jaime and River off on their own, but help expose the secret of Miranda after Simon nobly sacrificed himself to protect River from the Alliance Operative from the Serenity movie(the last part very much implied in places in the vision, but not spoilers)

[5] River running for it in a civil war zone on Verbena

[6] (combined with [5]; identical evil twins for most of the Serenity crew briefly seen) a identical evil twin brother of Wash named Dry that stabs Wash

[7] (a alternate take of the Serenity movie; the final vision for the episode) River goes crazy from a subliminal message through the Cortex screen on Serenity instead of in

the bar, kills everyone on the ship, and only Saffron is left alive onboard(who tried to come back in time to warn the crew from Alliance Intelligence's devious plan, only for her to be too late); but it turns out it's not really Saffron after all

[8] (related to above[1]) River points out Saffron isn't the least bit scared of her in the vision, and the real Saffron would still be really scared of her

[9] (related to above[2]) Vision Saffron then suddenly sounds just like River; some flashes of River's face between lightning flashes; and, Vision Saffron reveals that she represents River's dark side(starting to fully take form in Act II between visions to come after River; appeared then as a shadowy figure lurking in the shadows too quick to see)

[10] (related to above[3]) Vision Saffron though doesn't want to kill River unless she feels she has no choice; she tries hard to convince River giving herself up to The Alliance in exchange for letting go of the bounties on the rest of the crew would make things easier for her friends on Serenity to survive out in the Black with more legal work + for River herself to survive, and yet in a creepy way it's out of actually caring for River and her friends

[11] (related to above[4]) Vision Saffron claims she's been giving River visions in the first place to try to make her see how much worse things could get if she doesn't see reason

[12] (related to above[5]) Vision Saffron shows River quite a bit of Saffron's tragic backstory(but not the whole story of Saffron's tragic backstory) to point out River and Saffron are survivors and that River can't help but feel a little sorry for Saffron over her dark beginnings; Vision Saffron also tries hard to convince River that Vision Saffron herself is not as bad as Saffron, whether River can forgive Saffron or not for her sins

[13] (related to above[6]) River ultimately doesn't give in to her dark side, despite feeling very torn apart over her final vision for the episode(and over her dark side caring so much for her); River mentally sends herself back on Serenity just how the final vision started, she challenges Vision Saffron to a winner-take-all friendly race(which is mostly harmless), and goes for the big red button to call everyone back from the episode Out of

Gas(ultimately starting to really wake up from her visions in the episode and sending Vision Saffron away screaming in a brilliant burst of white light)

[14] (scrapped; too soon for River to fully find out Saffron's tragic backstory)

Vision Saffron shows River Saffron's tragic backstory to point out that she can't help but feel a little sorry for Saffron(that "not even a liar like her deserves this"), shows all of the crew dead or near dying in the fallout of The Alliance wiping out Saffron's town(not just the dead little girl), and tells River she should listen to her dark side if she wants them to all live, not end up like Saffron, or even worse at the hands of The Alliance

[15] the other big twist is that it wasn't nearly as bad in reality as River has been thinking; in a desperate act to medically save River from her head trauma + the critical wound in her side from earlier ~~to keep his sister calm and mostly happy for good~~, Simon got a coldly bittersweet idea

--> (the Simon waiting by the cryo-box part at least implied)

he'd keep her in sleep for some time with inducing a proto-comatose state, put her in the cryo box the crew still kept around all this time, and Simon would sit in front of the sealed cyro box and wait for the box to no longer rattle before opening it again; ~~with Kaylee engineering the cryo box to be half cold so River would stay conscious~~

--> most of the crew thought this was going a little too far, but Mal ~~and Jayne were~~ was kind of quick to point out that they don't seem to have much choice to medically save River ~~keep River calm and mostly happy in the long run~~; and after everything else the crew has tried to medically save River from her coma ~~to keep River calm~~, Kaylee, Zoe, and Wash reluctantly agree

[16] notable Chinese saying(s) from The Box Show

(1) [when Badger is insisting he didn't kill anyone in Book's or Inara's spy network]

Méishénme tǎoyàn de huá'érbùshí de shì!! = nothing of that nasty flashy business!!

5) (mostly scrapped; the alternate universe fanfiction story Serenity Lost to instead be a oneshot or a special feature of Can't Take the Sky From Us)

a episode near the end of Season 2 where River has a nightmare for what could have been(under Serenity Lost, but a kind of sped up version)

--> River wakes up back on Firefly like it didn't happen, but it's left very up in the air if it actually was only a nightmare or not

---

[BitterSweetTeller Tells More section; for The Box Show]

This episode gave River a final arc for Can't Take the Sky From Us.

It had her confronting her dark side and worries preluding to the movie Serenity.

And... What better way to do all of that than with River going from vision to vision in one day?

The episode Objects in Space obviously gave me some inspiration for the episode The Box Show.

At the same time... I really didn't want to repeat what people already did:

There was the short story Crystal by Brett Matthews where River got visions of what happened to everyone in the movie Serenity.

Then... I realized a great way to step up River's visions for herself would be having River end up in a coma.

It’s like River’s version of Star Trek: The Next Generation’s finale 2-parter episode All Good Things.

I know they’re very different. But, there’s some striking similarities between them if you look hard enough.

Making the episode The Box Show simultaneously a clip show and yet not made writing the visions a thrill.

I threw in some episode ideas from interviews with the cast of Firefly to really spice it up.

A Vision Saffron representing River’s dark side fit all too well in a way with River. River had hated Saffron for so long, and it's not hard at all to see why by the end of the episode.

The Saffron from the episode Trash would do anything to survive: Even leave Mal to die in the desert.

On another hand... The new Saffron, after Jayne became her boyfriend, wouldn’t want to betray him or any of his friends.

But... Trying to explain that one to River would be a hell of a night for anyone.

River would on her own change her view of Saffron later on in the bonus episode After Miranda.

But... for now... River still hasn't forgiven Saffron for the two times she double crossed Mal and the rest of the Serenity crew.

Unfortunately... Before I could finish writing the episode?

I was going through some big medical stuff, and that messed up my schedule across the board.

I got medically better, which is good.

On another hand... While researching for writing?

I came across a depressing fanfiction story called Serenity Screams. It was a Nightmare on Elm Street and Firefly crossover where everyone dies from Freddy on Serenity.

While that fanfiction story may in be written well in execution? It's depressing as f***.

After reading it? I really wanted to prove there could still be hope for the Serenity crew to come out alive after fighting Freddy.

Toward that end? I wrote my own Nightmare on Elm Street and Firefly crossover called Nightmares in Space.

It's a alternate what-if of the episode Objects in Space, while keeping Mal's and Wash's backstories from Can't Take The Sky From Us(because for nightmare fuel in this case, why reinvent the wheel?).

The mixed part of writing this what-if crossover fanfiction was the timing.

For both medical reasons and not? Extending my deadline for the episode The Box Show was a good call.

What most surprised me for writing the episode The Box Show was the what-if vision of River and Kaylee waiting until River is eighteen for them to be in a relationship.

I didn't go out looking to write that.

Yet... For the backstory behind the what-if vision of River and Kaylee in a cabin making a life for themselves?

I couldn't see it unfold any differently.

River may have for Dream Kaylee filled a void Simon left behind. But, River and Kaylee already were very close friends who like a lot of the same things.

That doesn't mean close friends out there automatically should date each other.

But... Kaylee and River could very well be open minded to the idea of dating each other:

Long as they're not dating anyone else.

Also...

The extra scenes at the end were bittersweetly priceless:

1) The full explanation of why River was in the cryo-box in the first place(flashback too).

2) Mal talking to Badger over the Cortex.

It also was a dark reminder that even Book's and Inara's spy network is not invincible (preluding to the fate of Book's and Inara's spy network in the bonus episode After Miranda).

In retrospect... For when I put up the episode Havens of Two Roads?

I realized many months later that giving the Serenity crew their own spy network might have at first seemed to have made the Serenity crew invincible in the long run(which is not really a Firefly thing to do).

Because of this unintended implication with Book's and Inara's spy network? I might have lost some followers of Can't Take The Sky From Us(which I am sorry for).

In the hope of rectifying this for Firefly fans?

I wrote that aforementioned dark reminder from Badger + added a related note to Serenity: The All-Fired Cut.

3) River talking to Inara over the Cortex about River's newfound love for Kaylee(and yet not wanting to break up Simon's and Kaylee's relationship; very understandably so).

On another hand... I did feel bad about cutting short the possibility of a River and Kaylee relationship.

To rectify this? I decided to write a alternate epilogue for the bonus episode After Miranda.

There were plenty of boxes to metaphorically unbox for the episode The Box Show.

But... It was well worth the journey for River and for Firefly fans.

A Serenity Movie Revisit

A revisit of the movie Serenity; with notes from before Serenity: The All-Fired Cut

1) [a added part of backstory for the time of the Serenity movie...]

instead of robot wives and husbands(or love-bots) already existing on the Core Planets for rich folk, human like robots were only starting to be a thing(only a

few including Mr. Universe's robot wife exist); simply because the technology to make love-bots wasn't possible until then, even for the rich folk(with plenty of debate in The Alliance if the human like robots should be heavily regulated or not)

2) (scrapped; Lenore instead saved for a secret ending + secret mission in Firefly Online, Season 1)

Mr. Universe's robot wife Lenore(or love-bot) was supposedly killed by the Operative after relaying to Mal Mr. Universe's message(from the movie Serenity); in the Operative's rush to stop the signal(and going after Mal), the Operative just shot her and didn't double check her robotic systems

--> River could have another "stroke of genius" and fix back up Mr. Universe's robot wife(one "stroke of genius" being reconfiguring the two way radios to be able to reach Serenity via the Cortex in the 2-parter Dead or Alive)

3) (scrapped, because still keeping to the original Serenity movie script as much as possible; besides, Stanton dies plenty of episodes before the Serenity movie anyway)

Wash lives(?), because it's what Joss Whedon said he would have done if Firefly wasn't cancelled(said so at a convention; but when making the movie Serenity, he wanted it to be any main character can die[so not so sure which way for sure])

--> maybe the hired gun appearing in After Burner(Stanton) dies on the ship instead?; who's recruited back again at the club in the movie Serenity, when supposedly Mal was letting River and Simon cut loose(and this is not long before River is triggered by The Alliance at the club)

4) (~~possibly?;~~ to reveal in After Miranda) when the Alliance Operative and Alliance forces leave no ground to run to, Saffron singlehandedly goes to the Heart of Gold and rescues Nandi from being killed(rather than running away from The Alliance)

--> not all the whores and boy whores make it; ~~at least~~ only Nandi and Petaline and her baby survive(~~and maybe one or two others~~)

--> (to reveal in After Miranda) on the other hand...Book, his crew, and most of his and Inara's spy network were killed by the Operative's forces when they surprise attacked Haven(which, after getting to know Book's crew and having at least a few adventures involving them and the Serenity crew, would be a very Joss Whedon thing to do; unexpectedly kill off beloved characters[while at the same time balancing things out in the long run with Saffron, Nandi, Petaline, and Petaline's baby still alive])

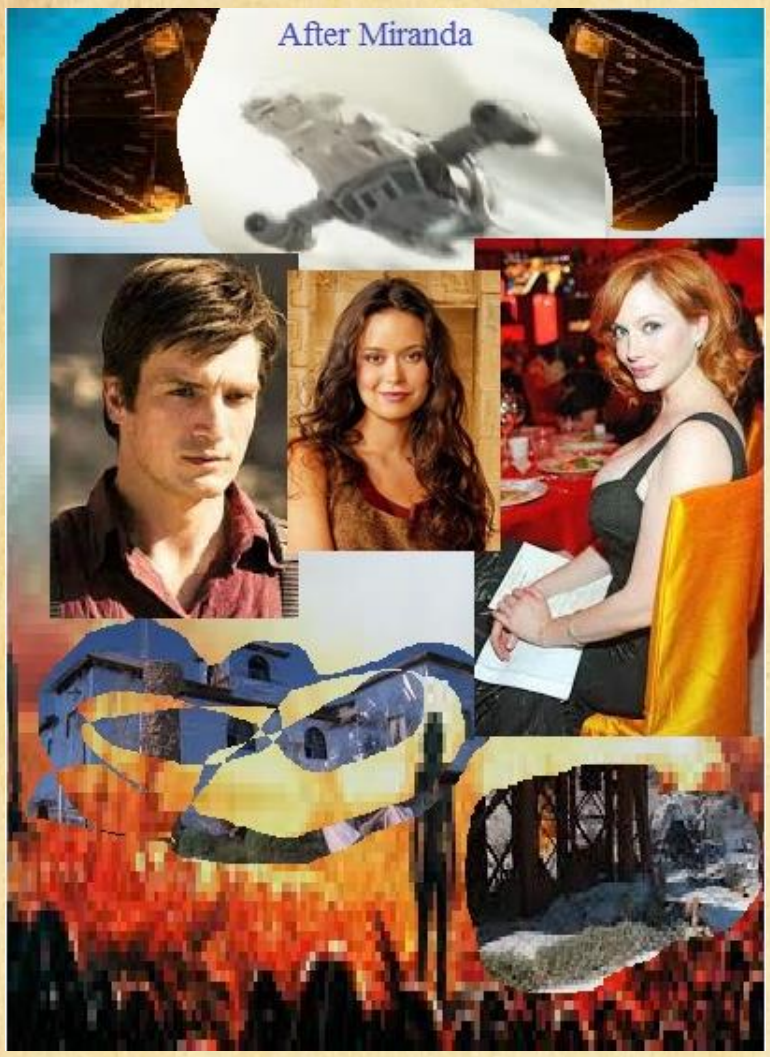
--> as soon Book's and Inara's spy network pass word on to Badger about River being triggered at the bar, Badger runs for it with his girlfriend(fearing for his life from both River and The Alliance then); meanwhile, Mingo and Fanty still vanish from sight when the Alliance Operative sends Alliance forces to kill everyone that gave shelter before to the Serenity crew(like in the Serenity movie)

5) (scrapped; seems completely unnecessary ~~possibly?~~)

a alternate cut of the movie Serenity, with Saffron as a temporarily Alliance allied double agent(but double agent for the Serenity crew's side this time); who turns on the Operative and helps the Serenity crew get away

OR

(scrapped; seems too convoluted ~~possibly?~~) a alternate cut of the movie Serenity, with Durran Haymer teaming up with the Operative to draw out Mal and Saffron(and threatening to fill the whole Companion House with a bio-weapon if they don't give themselves up)



After Miranda

After Miranda(set after the movie Serenity);

technically Season 2, episode 20; but, it's a epilogue/bonus episode for Can't Take the Sky From Us(with side notes saying "so if you haven't read the Serenity All-Fired Cut...")

1) River and Saffron meet again after the movie Serenity

--> for many months, River just hated Saffron(mental breakout or not) and didn't trust her as far as she can shoot her if it comes to it; but, if they meet again ~~in the movie Serenity or~~ the aftermath, that starts to really change

2) at first, River's ready to go on defensive with a cold glare in her eyes(hand to hand) and thinking right away Saffron must be there to stab them in the back again

--> Kaylee and/or Simon would try to calm her down, but River then would calm herself down after a bit of just standing there(because she read Saffron's deepest thoughts and is left stunned that her true nature has changed[and why that is, with Saffron's past kind of hitting close to home to River])

--> Saffron backs away with caution to get away from River; but River just turns to face her direction and tearfully says she's sorry they lost so much(but cryptically so), much to most of the crew's confusion

--> but, with what Jayne warned Saffron about River before she came, Saffron faintly smiles to herself(teary eyed herself) as she more slowly walks off; with Saffron instinctively knowing River was trying to respect her feelings by purposely cryptically saying she's sorry when River's been doing much better in a relative sense

3) some time later, Saffron confronts River in private about it; saying she doesn't hate her either, but that she really is not comfortable with talking about her past

--> to which River answers back that she doesn't have to answer, but that she reminds her a lot of Mal and his struggle for humanity within himself; in a somewhat cryptic way to protect Mal's feelings on the matter, but Saffron can read between the lines just by reading River's face(which is why it kind of hit close to home for River)

--> then Saffron looks a little amused and laughs a little, much to River's initial confusion; but River senses she's not trying to be mean, so she stays silent to let her say something first

--> Saffron then adds that she may still not like being read ~~Mal~~ much, but that River is the closest thing to a sister "she can turn up in the Verse where none was before"

--> River faintly smiles and says it's ok; something like "I put up with Jayne for a year, so how bad can it be?", which gives Saffron a snarky kind of smile(but in a sister rivalry kind of way)

--> Saffron then adds something like “long as you stay on my good side, you won’t get to know; sorry; it’s not me as much anymore, but I’m still really used to surviving by myself ~~using people~~ and not being on much anyone’s good side; but with you, I wouldn’t worry about it”

--> River assures her it’s ok and that she isn’t the only one getting used to being on more people’s good sides(referring to the aftermath of the secret of Miranda getting out and more people within The Alliance treating the Serenity crew as heroes)

--> River then hugs her; Saffron hugs her back(but cautiously at first, with the awkwardness on many levels for them)

--> they then pull apart and Saffron and River go to find Jayne and Simon(but Inara sees them hugging on her way down to the Bridge, a little surprised with a little smile[like with most everything else she’s uncertain and smiling a little about in the aftermath of the movie Serenity])

--> Mal finds out too

--> and before Saffron can find Jayne, Mal brings it up to Jayne; saying “well now, any friend of River’s is a friend of mine”(at peace with Saffron now because of it, but also to annoy Jayne for his own amusement)

--> (real annoyed)Jayne, “I’ll be in my bunk.”

--> he heads off to his bunk, frustrated and still annoyed over “there’s no escaping River” for him

--> then Saffron comes alone to his bunk

--> she assures him well enough that her hanging out with River won’t be often; not because of anyone telling her to, but because Saffron likes to keep her personal thoughts private just as much as Jayne does(and because of wanting him to be the only man who knows “all her parts”[while anyone else she’s played parts with has only seen one, two, or three parts to her; with Mal being the only one in the Verse who might’ve seen three parts to Saffron])

--> plus, to Saffron, River is like a annoying but lovable little sister who follows in Inara's footsteps; she may like hanging out with her, but they both have a hell of strong feelings that don't always mix well when they're together(which both of them are quickly starting to read from each other)

--> (related to above[1]; for years later, or something similar)

Saffron thinks she's still right, even when River says she isn't; which can annoy the hell out of Saffron(even more so than Jayne)

--> (related to above[2]; for years later, or something similar)

River is kind of easily disturbed by Saffron's sexual related thoughts and Saffron's long history of being a player to rob rich folk and others; even though she knows for sure by now Saffron means no harm to her or the crew(River needs space away from Saffron sometimes to think "happier thoughts" and chase those aforementioned thoughts away)

4) a few nights later, Mal, Inara, Saffron, Jayne, River, Simon, Nandi, Zoe, and Kaylee have a game of Tall Card in the galley on Serenity

--> in the middle of their Tall Card game[rough draft of scene written between the two episodes A Dying Wish and Kaylee, Get Your Priestess]

(to Kaylee)Saffron, "so... Are you still not gonna tell me about you and Simon having s...?"

(calls out kind of annoyedly)Kaylee, "Saffron!"

[there's some laughs and chuckles]

Mal, "well... Faint laugh. I warned all of you 'bout bringing her on my boat 'gain: That it would lead to a mighty bunch of complications. Looks like you're stuck with her now, little Kaylee."

[just about everyone laughs and chuckles]

[Kaylee playfully punches Mal in the arm]

[Mal laughs]

Kaylee, “I don’t tell ‘cause Simon would “kill me”. You ain’t know how hard it is to not tell her everything.”

Simon, “thank you.” Kaylee, “sure, Simon.”

Saffron, “aw. It’s true though: It’s hard not to tell me everything.”

(with a doubtful look)Inara, “yeah. You’d sure think so.”

[Saffron sticks her tongue out at her]

[most everyone laughs and chuckle some at that; not Jayne though, who looks annoyed at most everyone else for a bit]

Saffron, “but... River gets to spy all she wants. It’s not fair!”

[she pouts with her arms crossed]

[River can’t help but playfully grin a little; gives Saffron a patronizing “there, there”]

[Jayne huffs and gives River a warning glare; River pouts like she’s been caught doing wrong, which amuses Jayne enough to calm him down some]

[most everyone laughs and chuckles]

Jayne, “yah, Mal. How come Saffron don’t get to...?”

Mal, “because even though she got a real woeful story herself... And, I ain’t wishing it on a one... She ain’t had her brain experimented on by The Academy.”

Simon, “exactly. Thank you.”

Mal, “you’re welcome, Simon.”

(incredulously)Saffron, “you... Laugh. You mean River doesn’t ever spy when she feels like it? You think that always gives her a excuse: ‘specially when she seems so in control of herself now?”

Saffron, “I mean... I am happy for her for that. But... She gets to spy on Kaylee and Simon rolling around in the engine room and I don’t. Chuckle. I love to spy.”

[she very faintly smiles]

[River goes red in the face in embarrassment]

[Inara sighs deeply into her hand; Jayne is laughing hard, doubling over; everyone else is trying hard not to laugh and chuckle hard in front of River]

[Saffron hugs River close, whispering it's okay over and over; River faintly smiles back]

Simon, "River? Is that true?"

River, "I'm sorry. I'll try to not peek. Can't not feel though. Still hard."

Kaylee, "I know sweetie. But, me and Simon believe in you."

[puts a comforting hand on River's]

(almost at the same time)River and Simon, "thank you."

Kaylee, "you're welcome."

Inara, "there. Now everyone can be happy."

Saffron, "except me."

Nandi, "ohh. Don't you worry. I believe you can find another way to be happy. It'll work out."

[Saffron smiles wide]

Saffron, "aw. Thank you for being nice to me."

[Nandi smiles]

Nandi, "it's the least I can do."

[puts a comforting hand on Saffron's; Saffron puts a hand on top of hers]

Kaylee, "aww."

[Inara beams a little]

Inara, "well... I'm sure this is turning out to be a lovely evening. But, maybe we can all get back to playing cards?"

[everyone else is smiling at least a little]

[everyone else soon says yes; and they go back to playing Tall Card]

5) a game of free-for-all ball in the cargo hold with everyone there; but, with Nandi + Petaline(with her baby) watching and not playing

--> for this game of free-for-all ball; Mal and Inara are on a team, Jayne and Saffron are on a team, and Kaylee and River are on a team[rough draft of several scenes written between the two episodes A Dying Wish and Kaylee, Get Your Priestess]

(lightly)Jayne, “Saffron!”

[Jayne passes the ball to Saffron]

(lightly)Saffron, “got it, gunny!”

[Saffron runs past Kaylee]

[River is sneaking up to the upper level of the cargo hold]

[Saffron jumps up with the ball]

[Simon tries to block Saffron]

[Saffron hard flip kicks the ball in mid-air for the goal...flying out of Simon’s reach]

[but... Mal leaps sideways and up to catch the ball before it makes it in the goal]

Simon, “yes!”

[Simon, Inara, River, Kaylee, and Zoe laugh in triumph]

[soon... Mal and Saffron are wrestling over the ball]

Zoe, “hey! Break it up you two!”

[Mal and Saffron pause]

[interestingly... Mal and Saffron smile]

(lightly)Saffron, “hey: I’m not hurtin’ him, hon. No rules aside from that. Right?”

(lightly)Mal, “yeah. We’re just playin’, Zoe. Do it look double crossing snake like to you?”

Inara, “well...if you’re asking what I think...”

[Mal and Jayne give her annoyed looks]

[Inara makes a nervous face; briefly puts her arms up]

Zoe, “well... Okay.”

Mal, “thank you.”

[Zoe gives him a slightly amused look]

[Kaylee, Jayne, Mal, and Saffron chuckle some]

[Mal and Saffron are wrestling for the ball, rolling across the floor; they’re chuckling quite a bit]

Saffron, “you know, Malcolm... We could take this in the bed.”

(with a glare)Mal, “what?!”

[Saffron laughs hard some]

Saffron, “I know. I just wanted to made you let go of the ball.”

[she’s already gotten back up; she takes off with the ball]

Mal, “you dirty cheater!”

(cheerfully)Saffron, “only no rules!”

[everyone else laughs and chuckles]

[Saffron throws the ball for the goal]

[then... Kaylee comes down on the cargo hold crane to catch it; standing on a crate, with the crane hook holding up the crate via the heavy duty shipping net]

Kaylee, “sorry Saffron. But, it look like I got the shot now.”

[she throws it in the goal]

[Saffron smiles]

(impressed)Saffron, “oh, crap! You’re good.”

(lightly calls out)Kaylee, “thanks River! Thanks Saffron!”

[River giggles]

(lightly calls back)River, “you’re welcome Kaylee!”

[River is standing by the crane controls; she waves to Kaylee]

(lightly)Saffron, “ohh. Oh, I’m gonna get you for that one!”

(starts to sing)River, “can’t get me, can’t get me...”

[everyone else laughs and chuckles]

[River lowers the crane; letting Kaylee get off the crate]

Inara, “I’ve been waiting for you to not pay attention. Now, if you want to still play... You’re going to have to come after me first.”

[Inara now is dribbling the ball; smirking wide at Saffron]

[most everyone laughs and chuckles]

(completely unphased)Saffron, “all right Inara. I’m flexible.”

[Saffron runs after Inara]

[Jayne blocks Inara]

[but, Inara runs faster around him]

[Kaylee tries to get the ball; Simon tries to get the ball; but Inara is faster than them]

[Inara gets tackled by Saffron; but Inara already has passed the ball to Mal]

Saffron, “laugh. Yeah: It is just like old times.”

Inara, “but it did work.”

[Mal throws the ball into the goal]

Saffron, “crap.”

[most everyone laughs and chuckles]

[then River gets the ball]

[she heads for the lowered crane; so does Saffron]

[everyone else tries to go get the ball from River; but everyone else but Inara are too exhausted from playing to catch up in time]

[River and Saffron are climbing up the crane(both with gloved hands); with River holding the ball under one arm and climbing with the other arm]

[everyone else is more interested in watching now than trying to get the ball; they’re also catching their breaths some]

[River makes it to the top of the crane]

[she giggles to herself]

[everyone else has made their way up to the upper floor to keep watching River and Saffron]

[River about to throw the ball down for the goal...when Saffron hugs her from behind]

Saffron, “congratulations. You did very good getting this high up, River.”

[they smile to each other]

River, “ohh. Thank you.”

Saffron, “sure. But, you know... I’m pretty good myself.”

[River suddenly realizes Saffron has took the ball from her]

[Saffron runs across the crane, heading for the crane controls]

[River laughs some; so does Saffron]

[River tries to get it back from Saffron; she’s catching up]

[Jayne kind of quickly moves the crane arm around to try to give Saffron a easier shot; moving the crane up a little first to not have the crate grind against the floor]

(calls out)Saffron, “aww. Thank you gunny: I love you so much!”

(calls back)Jayne, “yah: I love you too, Saffron! Go take it!”

[Saffron chuckles]

Saffron, “all right, gunny. Here I go!”

[but... River is still catching up]

[River is about to tackle Saffron...when Saffron run jump tumbles off of the crane]

[she hurls the ball down in the air...making the goal]

[Saffron just as quickly grabs the goal; hanging eight feet or so in the air along with it]

(nervously)Saffron, “umm... Gunny? A little help now?”

[most everyone laughs and chuckles some; including River]

[Jayne rushes back down to the ground floor]

[River starts to walk across the crane and back for the crane controls; still chuckling quite a bit to herself]

[while Jayne is rushing back down to the ground floor... Mal and Zoe are still on the upper level]

(all too casually)Mal, “Zoe... How’d we get to be friends with two dead crazy little girls?”

[Zoe laughs some]

Zoe, “don’t have a good answer for you, sir.”

[Mal laughs some himself]

Mal, “oh well then.”

[from all the goal’s swinging about from Saffron’s own momentum... Her grip is starting to slip]

[she starts to fall]

[but... Jayne catches her in time]

[they hug each other close]

Saffron, “I just knew you’d catch me.”

(kind of nervously)Jayne, “damn right I would. I...I ain’t was worried.”

[Saffron chuckles some]

[they keep hugging each other]

[they stay like that for who knows how long]

6) not long after the free-for-all ball game, Saffron sticks around on Serenity while Mal’s crew takes on some passengers on Persephone “for old time’s sake”; one last job to pull together before Jayne and Saffron go off to do new jobs together and run a ship together

-->(related to above) Jayne’s and Saffron new ship is a Hanover class ship named the Jib-eseo Nolda Cobb; because after the Serenity movie, Saffron needs a new ship; Saffron’s ship the Jib-eseo Nolda II was confiscated by Alliance Intelligence in the Serenity movie to try to completely cut her off from escaping

from Alliance Intelligence's wrath(but Saffron still managed to take her riches with her on several discs before Alliance Intelligence could confiscate them and stowed away on a Alliance air assault vehicle[the same line of ships as the A.V. Sparrow from the Serenity movie] to get a quick ride to New Omaha in time to save Nandi, Petaline, and Petaline's baby)

--> Notable Chinese sayings for After Miranda(Act I)

1) duōme fēngkuáng de shījù! = what a insane turn in the Verse!

7) for Act II of After Miranda; interviews with the Serenity crew, Nandi, and Saffron with the newly forming Brown Sun Alliance(or at least as much of the interviews as possible in Act II[have written rough drafts of these interviews between many episodes])

--> (possibly?) have the interviews be a special feature instead; or worst to worse, save the expanded version of the interviews as a easter egg in itself

--> (possibly?) could ask questions about kinds of archival movies, TV, and music instead of mentioning any movie or TV by name(to avoid pop culture references as much as possible)

--> Notable Chinese sayings for Extended In-Character Interviews

1) (for Inara's interview) Zhǐ guānjié tuō dòng, yuán lèi qínggǎn fāyù bùliáng! = knuckle dragging, emotionally stunted ape!

2) (for Zoe's interview) gāisǐ de, dìyù gěile wǒ yīgè liègǒu tā mā de pàiduì! = goddamn, hell gave me a hyenas fucking party!

8) Speaking in an interview with TotalFilm, Whedon explained that he previously conceived a Shakespeare-themed episode for the cult sci-fi legend that would have seen Acker, Denisof and Marsters as a troupe of actors that somehow

became embroiled within the crew of Serenity, no doubt to the extreme eye-rolls of one Malcolm Reynolds (Nathan Fillion)

From Joss Whedon's own words:

I had planned to do an episode of Firefly with Amy [Acker] and Alexis [Denisof] and James Marsters as part of a traveling Shakespeare troupe. Because it's sort of a staple of the John Ford westerns is that there's always that over-the-top theatre guy, and I thought it would be terrific having them trying to put on a play in the cargo bay. But, I don't know if you know this, but we were cancelled; so I didn't get to do it.

--> Act II wasn't a good place to place this because it turned out to be full of interviews with the Serenity crew; save the Shakespeare troupe idea instead for Act III of the episode After Miranda; as a photo in the scrapbook as a Easter egg to fans

--> (kind of scrapped and kind of not)save for Act II of the episode After Miranda; when the bounties for the Serenity crew are lifted by the Brown Sun Alliance, and the Serenity crew can take up legal jobs again

9) epilogue for Can't Take the Sky From Us; set many years after the movie Serenity

After Miranda, Act III

--> somewhat directly based on the short story Take the Sky;

--> but Mal still together with Nandi(even after Inara's death)

--> and Jayne doesn't shoot himself with Vera; he and Saffron go out shooting in a fight with bad guys

-->(related to above; possibly?) or as they start to really approach their final years, they agree to drug each other one night and shoot each other(after having sex for the last time and as soon as they start to fall asleep) so that they'll never become senile(because they both don't want to come to blows for real over easy misunderstandings if they went senile, and they both know they very likely would if either of them became senile)

--> we also finally see Jayne's parents, Kaylee's parents, and relatively more presently River's and Simon's parents; in a montage between those many years(to add to the timelessness of the show, it's saved for the epilogue)

--> Jewel Staite said if she was going to pick someone to play Kaylee's father, it would be Ted Danson; "oh gosh. I...I just wanted to meet Kaylee's dad. We seem to have a really close bond and relationship and I thought it would be cool to meet him and see who would play Kaylee's dad. Like Ted Danson, mayhaps."

--> Jayne and Saffron get two Australian Shepherds and a farm on the grassland outskirts of Atreus; Corday(Jayne's dog and a girl) and Slaughty(Saffron's dog and a boy)

--> (related to above[1]) Saffron only got a dog in the first place because she didn't want Jayne's dog to not have someone to play with while Saffron and Jayne have sex in bed or go out on jobs together; but over time, Saffron came to really like playing brainy games and not so brainy games with Slaughty and Corday([not sexually]; fully realizing that Australian Shepherds are remarkably intelligent, and so it's close to playing with a intelligent person or intelligent people in Saffron's mind)

--> (related to above[2]) Saffron also made sure to get Corday sprayed so they don't have a surprise litter of puppies to take care of; even though Jayne may not have cared to do it in the short term

--> (related to above[3]) their dogs's names are both references to Adam Baldwin's guest appearance on the show Castle; Adam Baldwin played detective Ethan Slaughter on Castle for his guest appearances(take away the last two letters, put in a y, and you get Slaughty), and Ethan Slaughter's mentioned ex-wife was Madeline "Maddie" Corday(from the Castle episode Cool Boys)

Going Behind The Scenes of More Special Features for Can’t Take The Sky From Us

(< More Notes for Alternate Takes Junkyards >)

1) for deleted scene for Better Days, Part 1(Scene 12: Well, Can You?)

Why was it scrapped?

Because Kaylee didn't feel there was a real need for another modified two-way radio, after hanging out with Saffron a lot and starting to really trust her(for the 2 weeks when Mal's crew is rich)

2) for deleted scenes for Better Days, Part 2

[1] Scene 10: Gathering Up My Guns

Why was it scrapped?

Because it was a unnecessarily awkward scene; even if there was a newly bought house with a basement instead of a residential suite with no basement

[2] Scene 21: Were You Peerin' on Me?

Why was it mostly scrapped?

Because the “only thought about spying on Mal” part sounded a little too off for Saffron to do(she really likes to spy on people on or off a job)

[3] Scene 23: I Could Tell Easy You Love Each Other

Why was it scrapped?

Because Mal admits, when Saffron is breaking down, that he still doesn’t know about trusting Saffron(before they get back to Persephone to get Serenity back)

[4] Scene 24: Just Get it All Out? Really?!

Why was it mostly scrapped?

Because it was too dark for the aftermath of the 2-parter episode Better Days; but, kept in the “so used to getting out good on my own” part for Saffron

[5-6] Scenes 25-26: But...I Played Nice(Parts 1-2)

Why were they scrapped?

Because, with the millions Mal gave Saffron for playing a part earlier, Inara found a better way to make a deal with Saffron(albeit with blackmail);

also, the two deleted scenes But...I Played Nice turned out to be too dark for the Better Days 2-parter than originally thought

[7-10] Scenes 27-30: Saffron Kissing Up to Inara(Parts 1-4)

Why were they scrapped?

Because, in the long run, this would makes things worse on Mal and Inara and not better;

plus, even if Saffron and Inara could get along better as at least friends with benefits, Saffron would have to then be noticeably less like herself(and she'd be much more like Nandi, which seems too much flying in the face of who Saffron as a character is and too much flying in the face of her relationship with Jayne)

--> notable Chinese saying(s) from the deleted scenes Saffron Kissing Up to Inara

-{1}- Shāohuǐ dìqiú shàng suǒyǒu de yǔnshí kēng, bìng jiāng tāmen tuīdǎo zài wǒ de pìgu shàng! = burn all the craters of the earth-that-was and shove them down my ass!

[11] Scene 33: Just Something Good to Remind Me

Why was it scrapped?

Because of Kaylee wanting to be alone the night before and likely most of the day after; so, Saffron and Kaylee wouldn't have much a chance for a more official goodbye then

3) for deleted scene for Riverfront(Scene 25: At Least That's A Popular Theory)

Why was it scrapped?

Because it felt it was going on too long for build up for the mood of their short lived relationship;

plus, even if it was possible to fit it in the episode, cutting any part of this scene short would feel out of the question(it would be that hard to cut a part out of this scene)

4) for deleted scenes for Blue Suns and Townsfolk

[1] Scene 17: Hey Azure

Why was it scrapped?

Because keeping Wash's "anonymous source" anonymous felt it could happen to anyone and had more emotional punch to it;

and, this deleted scene was unnecessary anyway

[2-3] Scenes 20-21: Call me Crazy. But...(Parts 1-2)

Why were they scrapped?

Because wanted to keep the sense of Mal's crew being on their own and struggling to survive for most of season 2(with Inara and Saffron only able to come back and help a few times)

--> notable Chinese saying(s) from the deleted scenes Call Me Crazy, But...

-{1}- Tā mā de ràng wǒ zhuā kuáng! = fucking worrying me crazy

5) for deleted scenes for Hellbound

[1-2] Scenes 19-20: Serenity Escaping from The Academy(Parts 1-2)

Why were they scrapped?

Because putting them instead in the episode Hands of Blue for most of the teaser worked better in the long run;

for the episode Hellbound, these scenes weren't necessary to put there(but would've fitted the full version in the episode if could)

[3] Scene 21: Like a Crumpled Up Leaf in the Very Dim Light

Why was it scrapped?

Because it wasn't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full version in the episode if could)

[4] Scene 23: Not so Mite Whisper of a "Little War"

Why was it scrapped?

Because a flashback was all that was needed to show this part of backstory for Zoe and Mal(but would've fitted the full version in the episode if could)

6) for deleted scenes for Hands of Blue

[1] Scene 22: More'n Enough Faith for Two

Why was it scrapped?

Because it was lighter than what was going for for this episode;

Simon killing the Hands of Blue wouldn't have happened then, and Simon's transformation for this episode would be gone(killing someone for the first time and already starting to struggle with facing it, even though it was the Hands of Blue)

--> notable Chinese saying(s) from the deleted scene More'n Enough Faith for Two

[when Kaylee is talking to Mal just before Mal goes after the Hands of Blue]

-{1}- Qù zhǎo nàxiē jīqìrén bǎobèi húndàn = go get those robot baby bastards

[2-9] Scenes 23-30: I Get the Drop on Dobson(...and It Turns Out All Right?) Cut(Parts 1-8)

Why were they scrapped?

Because they turned the episode Hands of Blue into too much of a Jayne focused episode when it should be a more Mal focused one(even though this alternate take of the

episode does draw on more of the original Hands of Blue and Dobson parts from the comic mini-series Those Left Behind);

this alternate cut was too far removed from what the comic mini-series Those Left Behind originally was going for;

plus, it flies too much in the face of Book coming to the Serenity crew's rescue and Simon's transformation for the episode Hands of Blue

[10-12] Scenes 31-33: The Wraith's Turn to Burn(Parts 1-3)

Why were they scrapped?

Because putting them in the episode Havens of Two Roads instead as a flashback worked better in the long run;

for the episode Hands of Blue, these scenes weren't necessary to put there(but would have fitted the full version in the episode if could)

7) for deleted scenes for A Mixed Blessing On Us All

[1] Scene 10: I...I Don't Know What to Say

Why was it scrapped?

Because it was a little too dark for this episode, felt too same old same old to previous times in episodes with the crew talking about Saffron, and more details about the Mrs. Reynolds scrapbook can at least be put into the After Miranda episode(if there's no better place to put it)

--> (related to above) put more details about the Mrs. Reynolds scrapbook in the epilogue for The Sting: The Better Days Cut; don't need to put all these details into the After Miranda episode after all

[2-4] Scene 27, Scene 29, and Scene 32

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

--> (for Scene 27)

plus, most every Firefly fan knows of Boros and likely already saw a picture of the planet Boros anyway

8) for deleted scenes for All-Tempted and Junk

[1-9] Scene 2, Scene 4, Scene 5, Scene 13, Scene 16, Scene 18, Scene 22, Scene 24, and Scene 27

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

[10-13] Scenes 29-33: All-Fired on Adrenaline and Junk Cut(Parts 1-4)

Why were they scrapped?

Because this alternate cut seemed to go on too long for a episode, and it would mean no chance of Bellamy or one of Lionel Dudayev's thugs escaping from the junkyard to have the fairly strongly implied possibility of one of them sneaking onboard Serenity for the end of Act II(thereby undoing the lingering fear at the end of Act II to lead into the big surprise twist in Act III)

[14-15] Scene 35 and Scene 38

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

9) for deleted scenes for Genradiation Countdown Run

[1-6] Scenes 13-14, Scenes 11-12, Scene 15, and Scene 31

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

--> (from Scenes 11-12)

Core Impulsa = Latin for Core Shock

--> (related to above) implying there's a shock to a character's core coming in this episode(Book's); double meaning implying with it on a book cover(yet not too obviously so)

[7-9] Scenes 45-47: River's Genradiation Plant Part Adventure(Parts 1-3)

Why were they scrapped?

Because the whole idea around having a broken Genradiation part in the midst of it all in Act III turned out to be much more convoluted than originally thought(so, these deleted scenes weren't necessary to add anyway)

[10] Scene 56: Maybe I Ain't Should Have Accused You

Why was it scrapped?

Because a Alliance Commander asking to be a double agent for Mal's and Book's side was too light hearted for a Firefly episode to end on, and the original plan for Act III was too convoluted anyway

[11] Scene 57: Do We Have a New Heading, Commander? Commander?

Why was it scrapped?

Because in light of the original Act III for this episode being too convoluted, it wasn't necessary to add this deleted scene to the episode after all(but would've found a way to fit it in the episode if could)

[12-15] Scenes 61-64: Badger Bearing a Heart? Check His Pulse and Get the Doc!(Parts 1-4)

Why were they scrapped?

Because they weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted them in the episode if could)

10) for deleted scenes for High Blue Noon

[1-4] Scene 2, Scene 25, and Scenes 27-28

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

[5] Scene 29: Sonic QBZ devices, Blood, and Pregnancies... WTF?!

Why was it scrapped?

Because it seemed it could be a little too dark for this episode(but might've fitted this version in the episode anyway if could)

--> more original terms from the episode High Blue Noon

-{1}- sonic QBZs(no relation to Sonic the Hedgehog) = The name for the Hands of Blue's and the Hands of Gray's rod shaped sonic devices(but, it's only mentioned in the fifth deleted scene for the episode High Blue Noon)

11) for deleted scenes for A Dying Wish

[1-3] Scenes 1-3: I'm The Only One Not Poisoned, Little One(Parts 1-3)

Why were they scrapped?

Because they were a little too dark of a teaser for a already very dark episode;

also, these deleted scenes didn't keep most of the surprise twists as surprises like most any episode of Firefly does;

plus, revealing a certain surprise twist for this episode ahead of time would have undone the whole undeveloped idea this episode was based on in the first place(by eventually having none of the thirty five townsfolk left behind, thanks to River saving everyone in time)

[4] Scene 24: Mal's Version of Plan B in the Factory

Why was it scrapped?

Because the humor in it was a little too dark for this episode, in light of the really dark ending for this episode overall

[5-7] Scene 27, Scene 37, and Scene 49

Why were they scrapped?

Because they each weren't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full versions of them in the episode if could)

12) for deleted scenes for Kaylee, Get Your Priestess

[1-2] Scenes 17-18: Inara... I Ask Because I Care. You Sure You Ain't Saffron in Disguise?

Why were they scrapped?

Because Kaylee likes to see good in people, and she wouldn't assume someone is a imposter without stronger evidence to prove it;

this deleted scene seemed a little too dark for this episode anyway

[3] Scene 31: Hands of Red, Don't Just Leave Them Be

Why was it scrapped?

Because it wasn't necessary to add to the episode after all(but would've fitted the full version in the episode if could)

[4-10] Scenes 33-39: Two Double Crossing Snakes and One Grenade Makes for a Crazy Night Cut(Parts 1-7)

Why were they scrapped?

Because this alternate cut would fly in the face of what was originally intended for most of Mal's crew in this episode, and it kind of flies in the face of what was originally

intended for Saffron for the episode Double Jayne Trouble; plus, the original take of the final fight with Kalliav and her syndicate was more powerful anyway

--> [for the finale of the episode Kaylee, Get Your Priestess]

originally thought was going to have two alternate cuts of the final fight with Kalliav, with Mal killing Kalliav for one, and Saffron defeating Kalliav for one

--> (related to above) but, Mal killing Kalliav became part of the central version of the final fight in the episode, and Inara doing what she could to bodyguard others in the midst of the final fight also became part of the central version of the final fight in the episode; so only ended up with one alternate cut of the final fight, with Saffron being instrumental to take down Kalliav and her syndicate all the quicker(even though Saffron didn't get to fight one on one with Kalliav like originally planned for the alternate cut)

13) for deleted scenes for Double Jayne Trouble

[1-2] Scenes 21-22: Run for It!

Why were they scrapped?

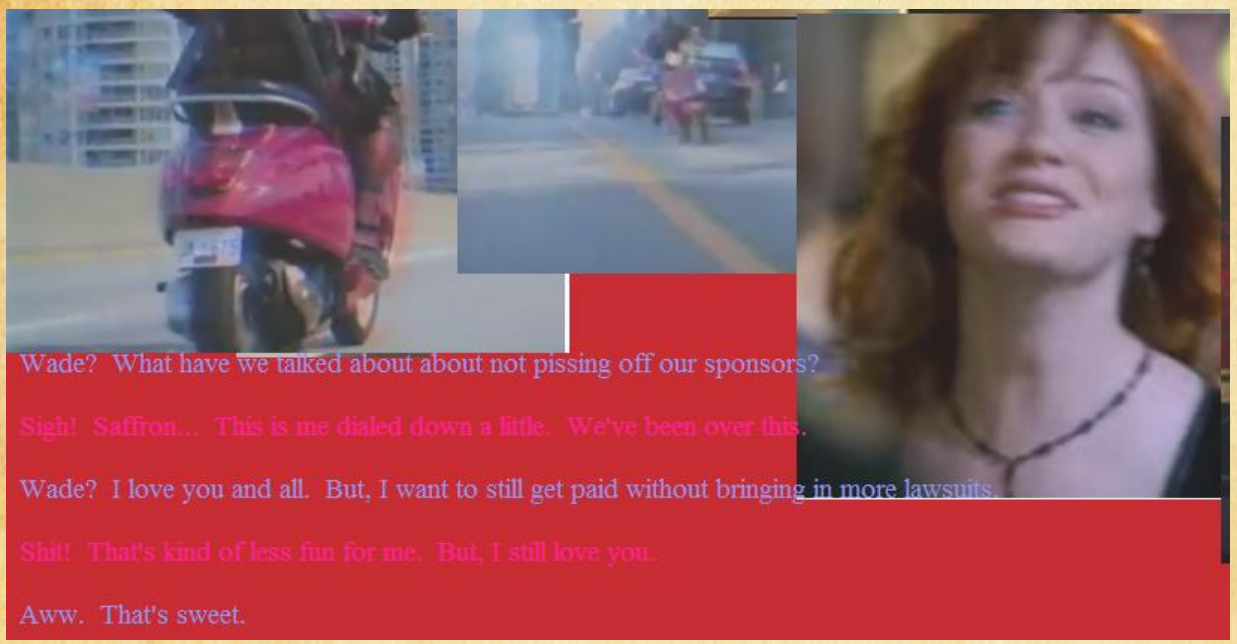
Because they weren't as emotional a impact for the cave-in, and Mal and Zoe taking out two AATSs wouldn't be as emotional a impact for them fighting their way past Alliance forces in Act III; plus, AATSs are not Durran Haymer's style anyway

[3-6] Scenes 28-31: The Cold Winds Get Unleashed Cut, Parts 1-4

Why were they scrapped?

Because Jayne was too injured to fight much after the original version of the cave-in, and the original version still managed to hit all the most important notes for the showdown with Durran and Jane McCloud

Terminators franchise... Eat your heart out.
Or was that Lightning McQueen?
What is Cars anatomy again? Ohh right. Pure lightning.
I ride on storms, asses, rainbows, and chimichangas. Suck it, Lightning McQueen!


Wade? What have we talked about about not pissing off our sponsors?
Sigh! Saffron... This is me dialed down a little. We've been over this.
Wade? I love you and all. But, I want to still get paid without bringing in more lawsuits.
Shit! That's kind of less fun for me. But, I still love you.
Aww. That's sweet.

(< When Deadpool Met Saffron >)

A alternate reality crossover with Deadpool 2; set after the end of the movie where Deadpool goes around time travelling(specifically the Super Duper **** Cut of the movie[more details to follow for the summary here, because it is long])

--> after Deadpool unsuccessfully tries to convince Cable to help him kill Hitler when he was a baby, he time travels to the 26th century; at first hoping to find a member of the Serenity crew that could get the job done

--> he arrives at the end of the Serenity movie; but, River is quick to shoot down the job offer before Deadpool can finish his job offer for Mal(pointing out that taking the job would make The Alliance rise in the 20th century without WWI or WWII to deter China from taking over the Earth-That-Was)

--> River breaks the fourth wall and cuts into Deadpool's narration; still screen in back, with a relatively more present River and Deadpool suddenly appearing onscreen(all just to hilariously hurry the plot along)

--> Deadpool leaves in great frustration; but, just as he goes back through time, he gets a crazy idea(try to find one of the other women on Mal's crew to at least come away from it with a good time after Vanessa "is likely dead from old age anyway")

--> then, it cuts to a black and white sitcom like street with houses with a Serenity Street street sign; and Deadpool knocking on the doors of the women from Serenity one at a time, and then finally Saffron's door(after River, to get Deadpool off her porch all the quicker, gives Deadpool the idea to go to the front porch of Saffron's house and knock on Saffron's door)

--> have written rough drafts for all the scenes for When Deadpool Met Saffron between many episodes; these are only two examples of those rough drafts(from the Deadpool knocking on the doors part)

(1) Deadpool, "hey. Can I tell you something really juicy?"

Inara, "scoff. You don't even know me at all. Why would I want to?"

Deadpool, "because you have...wait for it... Gasp! A identical sister named Vanessa Ser...Serra. Yeah. Totally not from hundreds of years ago. Because, that would be crazy."

Inara, “faint laugh. I don’t know who you think you are...or if you can even think.”

Deadpool, “okay. Ouch.”

Inara, “but, I don’t need to see your face to know you’re lying to my face.”

Deadpool, “you want truth? You can’t handle the truth.”

Inara, “try me.”

Deadpool, “sigh. Okay. Fine. Here goes. You’re played by the same actress in...in awesome...awesome roles... I’m Deadpool, by the way. You sure we can’t just f*** already, Morena?”

[a long pause; Inara glaring]

Inara, “you’re calling me a liar?”

Deadpool, “no, no. I...”

Inara, “I appreciate the asking. But, I also think you have me sadly confused with someone that loves you more than I ever could...and you smell. Really really smell.”

Deadpool, “shit.”

Inara, “kind of petty gos se. But, close enough. At least you’re upfront about being that way for most women you ask out: A Dead Pool of chances. Good bye.”

[shuts the door in front of him]

(calls out)Deadpool, “still gorgeous!”

[just a faint laugh from the other side of the door]

Deadpool, “shit.”

(2) [Deadpool knocks on the door; with his guns loaded and ready]

Saffron, “hello. A little late for Halloween for Earth-That-Was. But, who are you handsome?”

Deadpool, “oh my god. Oh god. You...you’re the bounty hunter Saffron?”

[Saffron faintly smiles]

Saffron, “who wants to know?”

Deadpool, “Saphra? Violet? Red? I’m sorry. These names of yours and timelines can get so confusing.”

[Saffron laughs hard some]

Saffron, “I only know of my own time...and good times with a lot of men with “smoking guns”. Who are you?”

Deadpool, “Deadpool. Wade Wilson. Star of his own movie series, unforgettable animated cameos, time lord of the internet wars... Oh. And, had his own Corps of Walking Dead mes to go around...only less zombies and more me.”

[Saffron laughs hard some at the last part]

Saffron, “well, you sure know how to get me to laugh. Very few guys can do that off the clock. Why don’t you come in? Take off your mask?”

Deadpool, “umm...sorry. Not sure taking the mask off is a good idea. Have you even seen my first movie?”

Saffron, “no. Just tell me: Why? I really want to see if you are alive under there.”

Deadpool, “faint awkward laugh. Interesting word choice.”

[Saffron raises her eyebrow]

Saffron, “what do you mean?”

Deadpool, “sigh. All right. I went through one movie of this. Can’t hurt to try it.”

[kind of slowly takes off his mask...showing her his cancer ridden face]

Saffron, “oh god. You... Are you actually about to die just when you were going to come all this way to ask me something?”

[gets teary eyed]

Deadpool, “no, no. Not at all. I have a super duper maximum effort healing factor. Just...just please don’t cry. I hate pretty women crying over me.”

[Saffron sniffles hard some]

Saffron, “well, you... Well, you sound really certain. Come in. I could take a look.”

Deadpool, “you have a lot of career paths.”

Saffron, “and I’m good at all of them, Wade Wilson.”

Deadpool, “awesome.”

[they go inside the house together]

[Deadpool lying on the couch, with his mask off and the top half of his costume off]

[Saffron in a doctor’s outfit and stethoscope; her smoking off handgun on the doctor’s tray along with some pulled out bullets she fired into him]

Saffron, “I...I don’t know how really. If you didn’t let me shoot you just to be sure...I...I would say you would just be trying to play me. You really can’t be killed?”

Deadpool, “nope. Turned on yet?”

[Saffron laughs hard some]

Saffron, “actually, it started at the open door to my mind...and practically everywhere else if not for the smell.”

Deadpool, “you don’t happen to have a husband, do you?”

Saffron, “not in this time line. But, I’m good friends with another me over in another story. She is married.”

Deadpool, “cool. But, how did you...?”

[Saffron gets out her time-travelling device(like Cable’s; but more of a relic with some lingering cobwebs dangling from it)]

Saffron, “I also got one. Found it in the 26th century.”

Deadpool, “how convenient to throw out a bunch of questions for my fans, Firefly fans, and your fans.”

[Saffron laughs some]

Saffron, “yes. I do have a lot of fans myself. But...go ahead. Ask me.”

[puts a comforting hand on his]

Deadpool, “do...do you want to come back to have a threesome?”

Saffron, “all right. But...now I ask two things.”

Deadpool, “okay.”

Saffron, “who’s the third guy or girl?”

Deadpool, “Vanessa. Don’t worry: We already got so screwed up lives, try to not be like our parents, and yet get it on like pop rings.”

[puts his finger up and down through a closed loop(made with two of his fingers)]

[Saffron laughs hard some]

[then deeply sighs]

Deadpool, “what? Too touchy feely for the doctor’s office?”

Saffron, “not for my doctor’s office. Just...just you really are not the only ones with screwed up lives. My other me and me share the same backstory.”

Deadpool, “great!”

[Saffron starts to glare heatedly at him]

Deadpool, “faint awkward chuckle. Not back then. Sorry. But, great you’re still kicking ass and all.”

[Saffron smiles wide at this; despite still being teary eyed]

Saffron, “yeah. It is.”

Saffron, “so...”

Deadpool, “yeah?”

[Saffron makes a face]

Saffron, “well...if you promise to let me bring a lot of soap and shampoo to bathe after every time... Sigh. I’m sorry. But, god, you do really smell.”

Deadpool, “it’s fine. Faint laugh.”

Saffron, “what? What is funny?”

Deadpool, “Vanessa bathes plenty too. But, after every meal.”

Saffron, “good to know. But, if you promise to let me bring a lot of soap and shampoo to bathe myself...”

Deadpool, “yeah? Yeah?”

Saffron, “...then I’d love to have a threesome with you and her.”

[Deadpool starts to get up with a jolt; putting his mask and costume back on]

Deadpool, “ohh! Yes! We’re getting it on now: Back...to the Future!”

[Saffron laughs hard some]

[soon, they’re time travelling together...back for his apartment]

--> after some explaining, Saffron, Vanessa, and Wade have a threesome in the bedroom

--> but, a few hours beforehand, Deadpool offering a kind of burnt wedding dress like Blake Lively’s(aka like Ryan Reynolds’s wife’s wedding dress) to Saffron; only a different color than Blake Lively’s dress(yes, it’s a insane Ryan Reynolds Easter egg)

--> a few nights later, it turns out Saffron has been playing Deadpool; every time after having sex with them, she’s been slipping little X-gene inhibitor pills in Deadpool’s drinks to gradually inhibit his healing factor without him noticing

--> then, when Vanessa is out shopping, Saffron shoots Deadpool with her handgun; Deadpool is groaning violently on the floor, clutching his shot shoulder

--> Saffron then reveals that taking him back to The Brown Sun Alliance in the 26th century to study his super duper healing factor would give herself two to six billion credits(and quite a thrill as well)

--> Deadpool then reveals that he broke through the fourth wall to see it coming, and had his video game counterpart replace him for when he was supposedly drinking drinks

--> Saffron then reveals that she brought a syringe with her as a backup plan; which she used to pull out a blood sample while they were having sex one time(and then

quickly injects herself with it to give herself Deadpool's mutant powers as soon as Deadpool starts to get back up again)

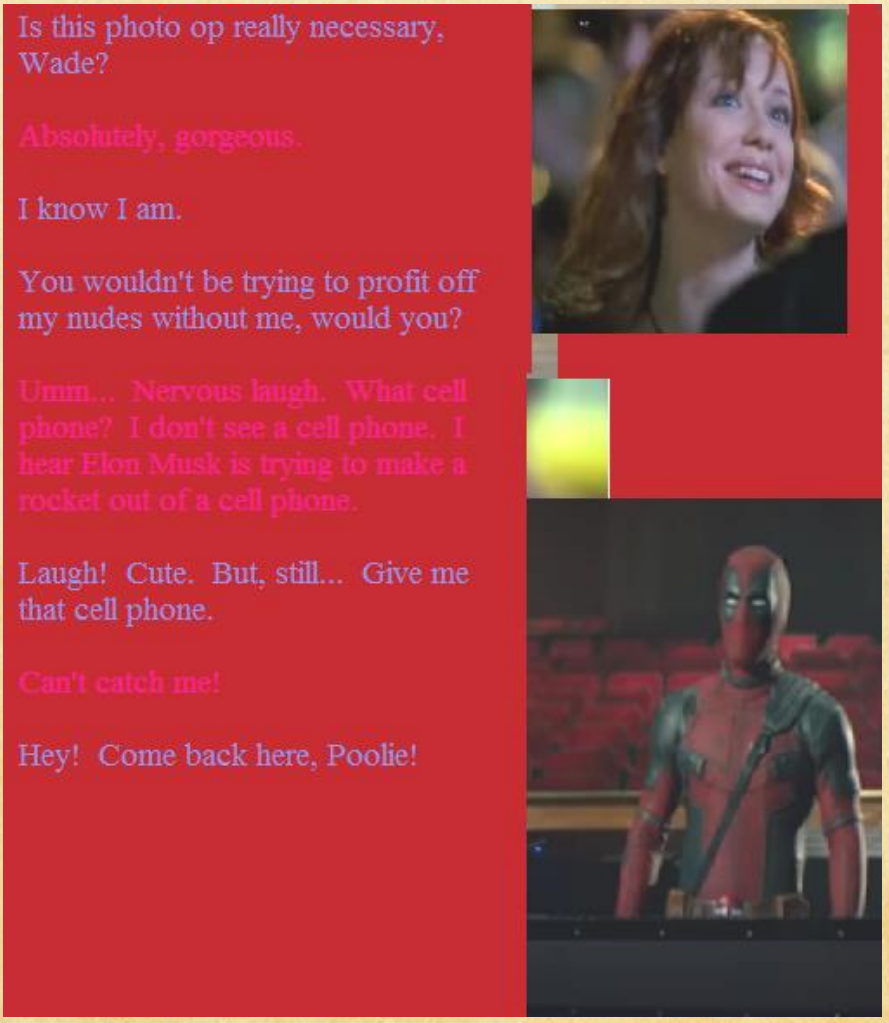
--> Deadpool is also kind of quick to point out that collecting a bounty on her in the 21st century or 26th century is really tempting to him

--> Saffron lets him get into his costume and mask first

--> Deadpool all too casually thanks her for it, and Saffron all too casually welcomes him for it

--> then they really start to fight; both with super duper healing factors

[Bonus picture for When Deadpool Met Saffron]


Is this photo op really necessary, Wade?
Absolutely, gorgeous.
I know I am.
You wouldn't be trying to profit off my nudes without me, would you?
Umm... Nervous laugh. What cell phone? I don't see a cell phone. I hear Elon Musk is trying to make a rocket out of a cell phone.
Laugh! Cute. But, still... Give me that cell phone.
Can't catch me!
Hey! Come back here, Poolie!

1) Deadpool and Saffron even duel with Final Fantasy VII gun swords

2) when just fighting each other isn't getting much anywhere, Deadpool and Saffron both call in backup for their sides(and bring them over in seconds with their time travel devices)

3) Deadpool tries to call in movie Domino first; but Saffron sends a time portal counterattack from her time travel device to cancel out the signal(it's plot convenience playhouse to keep the extremely lucky movie Domino from being in the fight; otherwise it'd all be over too soon)

4) Saffron calls in Max Guevera from the Dark Angel TV series, and Deadpool calls in Vanessa from a future point in time(who has the full powers of her comics counterpart Copycat)

5) [original draft of Max Guevera vs. future Copycat]

(1) future Copycat blames Deadpool for her messed up future in the first place; but with Max Guevera as her friend, future Copycat's life suddenly seems worth living with a more hopeful future to live in(the Dark Angel show's future); and future Copycat and Max Guevera go off to Seattle to casually have some beer together; leaving both Deadpool and Saffron to fight among themselves

(2) after a bit of fighting, Max Guevera, with her parallel processing, quickly realizes she has stronger chances of reaching out to future Vanessa than Deadpool; Max Guevera keeps future Vanessa away from Saffron; Max Guevera soon convinces future Vanessa that her future doesn't have to always be fighting

(3) [the future timeline that future Copycat is from]

a future where Apocalypse has turned what's left of the whole world into one big endless gladiatorial Mad Max and Matrix styled arena for his amusement, but all the necessities and comforts of modern home for the Horsemen of Apocalypse(victors) in glass pyramids

--> (related to above[1]) but... Max Guevera herself breaks the fourth wall with a TV remote to skip to the end part of her fight with future Vanessa; with both Deadpool and Saffron stunned in very mixed feelings

6) after that, Deadpool quickly calls in present day Vanessa(who can't be convinced to turn on Deadpool) and brings back from the dead Brixton Lore(from the Hobbs & Shaw movie)

--> (related to above) and it's soon Vanessa, Deadpool, and Brixton on motorcycles(with Brixton on his signature motorcycle) Vs. Saffron(who temporarily gives herself a heavily Robocop modeled battlesuit and the motorcycle from the Robocop remake to increase her chances against Brixton) and Roche(from the Final Fantasy VII remake) on the Texas highways

7) whoever wins the fight; for Aftermath, Part 1, cut to almost the end of Law and Order: SVU Season 12 finale episode Smoked(with moderate spoiler warning for readers) with Deadpool and Saffron showing up

--> (related to above[1]) in plot convenience playhouse, Deadpool teleports there with Saffron and freezes time to save the teenager Jenna Fox from dying from the Law and Order: SVU Season 12 finale episode Smoked by assuring her they'll kill the criminals for her instead while she can go live a regular teenage life(in a very warped Deadpool 2 movie like mirror of saving the teenage mutant Russell Collins[aka Firefist] from becoming a killer)

--> (related to above[2]) for Aftermath, Part 2, Deadpool leaves crime tips to help Olivia Benson catch bad guys; in a very warped working partnership of sorts

8) then Deadpool does closing words Deadpool style on When Deadpool Met Saffron; with stage dive, Vanessa, Saffron, and more

---

(< In-Character Gag Reel >)

a big part of why being to get around fanfiction dot net's rules on non-historical and non-fictional characters not being allowed; and yet still have a gag reel for Can't Take the Sky From Us in the spirit of Firefly, the show's mainstream gag reel, and the Serenity movie's gag reel

--> and because the show's mainstream extended gag reel had a editing gag of the Millennium Falcon flying through Serenity in the opening to Objects in Space, all bets are off in the in character gag reel(pop culture references included, so long as it's really funny)

(< Storytime on Serenity >)

[(1) to turn into part of a storytelling special feature for Can't Take The Sky From Us]

River's story from the original draft of the episode Dead or Alive, but expanded on as well as shown

--> Simon turns back to the surgery. But not before glancing over at River.

River telling her story to the children. She's smiling, enjoying herself.

RIVER (sweetly sing-songy)

And then the beautiful princess got tired of waiting for her handsome prince and tried to escape, but they found her and to punish her they locked her in a smelly, white, cold room where the evil blue

demons strapped electrodes to her face and started to shock her. Zap, zap, zap, until she couldn't stop screaming. Only no one could hear.

River's still smiling, the kids not so much. In fact, they're just a little bit freaked out by the story and by the freaky lady telling it.

[(2) to turn into part of a storytelling special feature for Can't Take The Sky From Us]

(a Jayne story with dragons[but Saffron kind of helped a little with showing him what dragons are from myths before], spun off of a fantasy idea from Adam Baldwin on what he would see his character do after the Serenity movie)

A after Serenity movie story with Jayne being like Jeremiah Johnson, disappears off into a mountain with Saffron

-{1}- while Jayne and Saffron are out hunting Alliance Operatives, Reavers find Jayne's house and burn it down

-{2}- Saffron is badly hurt from hunting those Alliance Operatives, but makes it back home with Jayne kind of carrying her

-{3}- Saffron finds a mostly not charred piece of couch to lie down on and rest; Jayne fixes her up well enough with surgery(because in Jayne's story, Jayne is smart at everything without trying hard)

-{4}- and then Jayne decides, "okay, I'm gonna go face him and real seek revenge"

-{5}- Saffron wishes him well with that, and reminds him now would be a good time to try out those “dragon grenades”

-{6}- Jayne goes off to seek revenge on the still alive Alliance Operative that badly hurt Saffron and the Reavers; then just wipes them out like a dragon with his “dragon grenades”(big as a hand each; fiery explosions)

[(3) to turn into ~~a oneshot or a~~ part of a storytelling special feature for Can’t Take the Sky From Us; a Saffron story ~~pretty much scrapped~~]

a alternate take of a Serenity movie Titled Serenity Lost(possibly for later, rated Teen)

A alternate ending for Heart of Gold, where River helps Nandi kill the creep sheriff(foreseeing the possibility of Nandi’s death if Mal doesn’t get out there in time by a few seconds)

-{1}- River swiftly disarms the creep sheriff(and goes off to join Simon like nothing happened); but even dazed, the creep sheriff nearly kills Inara by picking up the gun again and firing(with Nandi the only one setting off his aim, away from Inara’s heart[Inara stabilized on Serenity, but in a coma])

-{2}- Inara wakes up five years later, to find out from Nandi that Serenity’s crew is a broken family(because of Inara’s coma)

-{3}- with Inara not conscious to stop Mal, Mal killed the creep sheriff(thinking he killed Inara)

-{4}- no one blamed Mal for killing the creep sheriff

-{5}- but realizing Inara was just in a coma and that he might have overreacted, a torn up inside Mal left Serenity and his crew(thinking it was best to leave before he dragged down Inara and the rest of his crew further down to darkness with him)

-{6}- Jayne left with Mal too, and soon both became partners in crimes with Saffron(with Mal seeing them as the only people he can't possibly drag further down to darkness with him while keeping themselves flying, he didn't think there was a better choice to survive himself)

-(kind of scrapped and kind of not) a broken hearted Mal has left Serenity and became a merciless assassin(and is now Saffron's partner in crime)

-{7}- Nandi took Inara and her fellow whores away to another moon colony, after the Alliance nearly caught up to them

-{8}- Mal massacres a evil crime boss's ~~Niska's~~ people on a job, and even innocent Alliance feds that got in the way ~~working under Niska~~)

-(related to above)after the massacre, most of Serenity's crew never spoke to Mal again(but Zoe and Wash never spoke to Mal again soon after Jayne and Mal left with Saffron); Book and Jayne left over a heated ethics argument, and Jayne stayed with Mal and Saffron ~~became a assassin too~~

-(related to above[2]) after Mal reaches the point of no return, there's nothing left to get in the way of him falling for Saffron again(leading to Mal and Jayne having threesomes with Saffron)

-(related to above[3])Book still out there, alive

-{9}- Almost all the rest of Serenity's crew die at the Hands of Blue(because Jayne and Mal not there to save them as their "big guns")

-(related to above)River only survivor and escapee; was nearly taken out herself by hypersonics from the Hands of Blue --> Who wanted to bring her back alive to the Alliance

-{10}- River and her "psychic unit" were part of the Alliance's effort to stop crime before it happened --> Through Delta wave transmission to the subconscious(?)

-(related to above; kind of scrapped and kind of not)but the first "psychic" experiment worked all too well --> the torturous scientists involved had Delta wave aftereffects themselves(seeing torture everywhere in their nightmares/dreams)

-(related to above[2]; kind of scrapped and kind of not)sooner or later, the torturous scientists couldn't sleep or eat much at all; the only thing left for them to like was torture --> Torturing each other to the point of going mad ~~becoming Reavers~~

-(related to above[3]; scrapped)the nearby human colony was brutally massacred and raped by Reavers --> engine parts for ships gathered as well to escape the Alliance(who were too late to stop them)

-(related to above[4]; kind of scrapped and kind of not)most of the "psychic unit" managed to escape at first, but were mostly recaptured in their unsure state of mind --> for even where to go from there or who to trust

-{11}- (kind of scrapped and kind of not) In light of the massive failure with the Reavers, the Alliance separated the "psychic unit" subjects across the inner planets --> also instead towards predicting the future(seeing where criminals will be after identifying them)

-(related to above)half of the business dealings Serenity's crew has had either left the Alliance altogether or been shut down by the Alliance --> possibly same with colonies that don't want a part of the Alliance

-{12}- Inara now is the Alliance's only chance to survive from Mal; through a psychic echo back into time to wake up Inara a few years sooner(to stop Mal from causing the massacre and losing himself); Inara is hoping to save him from himself with River's help, despite all the wrong he's done

-(related to above[1]; scrapped) psychic echo back into time to River's past self(to stop River from trying to stop the sheriff in the first place, undoing this dark timeline)

-(related to above[2]) Mal's plan --> turn the "psychic unit" against the Alliance, leaving them vulnerable for every man and woman that hates the Alliance to kill them

---

Notable Chinese sayings for Storytime on Serenity(Act II)

1) Fēicháng zhōudào de jiédiǎn = extraordinarily thoughtful Nodens

--> Nodens is a Easter egg in itself; Nodens is a Celtic god for hunting, healing, the sea, and dogs(not far off from one side of Jayne, even though he's not a god of healing)

2) Wǒmen zhèngzài xiàjiàng dào yī duī fènbiàn zhōng! = We're descending into a mountain of feces!